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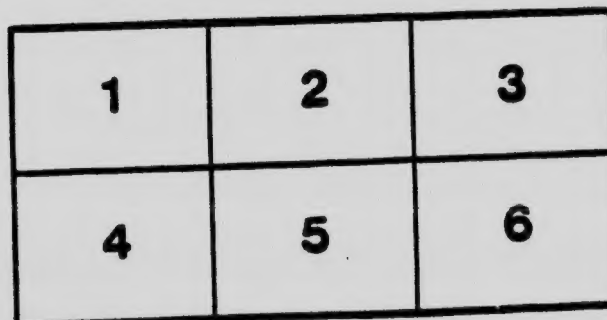
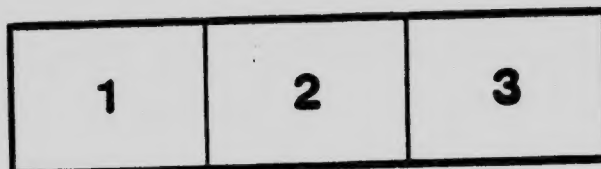
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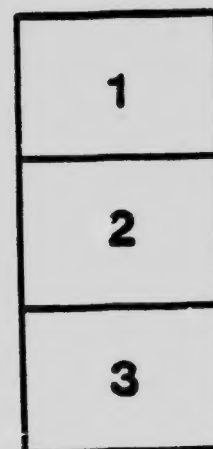
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Revised Canadian Edition

The Maberley Nobels

by

ROB ROY PARTING THE DUELISTS RASHLEIGH
AND FRANCIS OSBALDISTONE

FROM A TAINTING BY

J. R. MACDONALD A.R.S.A.

Printed especially for the Members of the Association for the
Promotion of Fine Arts in Scotland

For Special Distribution only

1911

**ROB ROY PARTING THE DUELISTS RASHLEIGH
AND FRANCIS OSBALDISTONE**

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Royal Canadian Edition

The Waverley Novels
by
Sir Walter Scott



Rob Roy
The Pirate

Issued for Subscribers only through the
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Royal Canadian Edition
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ADVERTISEMENT TO THE FIRST EDITION

WHEN the Editor of the following volumes published, about two years since, the work called *The Anti-quary*, he announced that he was for the last time intruding upon the public in his present capacity. He might shelter himself under the plea that every anonymous writer is, like the celebrated Junius, only a phantom, and that, therefore, although an apparition of a more benign, as well as much milder, description, he cannot be bound to plead to a charge of inconsistency. A better apology may be found in the imitating the confession of honest Benedict, that, when he said he would die a bachelor, he did not think he should live to be married. The best of all would be if, as has eminently happened in the case of some distinguished contemporaries, the merit of the work should, in the reader's estimation, form an excuse for the Author's breach of promise. Without presuming to hope that this may prove the case, it is only further necessary to mention that my resolution, like that of Benedict, fell a sacrifice to temptation at least, if not to stratagem.

It is now about six months since the Author, through the medium of his respectable publishers, received a parcel of papers containing the outlines of this narrative, with a permission, or rather with a request, couched in highly flattering terms, that they might be given to the public, with such alterations as should be found suitable.¹ These were, of course, so numerous that, besides the suppression of names and of incidents approaching too much to reality, the work may in a great measure be said to be new written. Several anachronisms have probably crept in during the course of these changes and the mottoes for the chapters have been selected without any reference to the supposed date of the incidents. For these, of

¹ As it may be necessary, in the present [1829-33] edition, to speak upon the square, the Author thinks it proper to own that the communication alluded to is entirely imaginary.

course, the Editor is responsible. Some others occurred in the original materials, but they are of little consequence. In point of minute accuracy, it may be stated that the bridge over the Forth, or rather the Avondhu (or Black River), near the hamlet of Aberfoil, had not an existence thirty years ago. It does not, however, become the Editor to be the first to point out these errors; and he takes this public opportunity to thank the unknown and nameless correspondent, to whom the reader will owe the principal share of any amusement which he may derive from the following pages.

1st December 1817.

INTRODUCTION TO ROB ROY

WHEN the Author projected this further encroachment on the patience of an indulgent public, he was at some loss for a title, a good name being very nearly of as much consequence in literature as in life. The title of *Rob Roy* was suggested by the late Mr. Constable, whose sagacity and experience fore-saw the germ of popularity which it included.

No introduction can be more appropriate to the work than some account of the singular character whose name is given to the title-page, and who, through good report and bad report, has maintained a wonderful degree of importance in popular recollection. This cannot be ascribed to the distinction of his birth, which, though that of a gentleman, had in it nothing of high destination, and gave him little right to command in his clan. Neither, though he lived a busy, restless, and enterprising life, were his feats equal to those of other freebooters who have been less distinguished. He owed his fame in a great measure to his residing on the very verge of the Highlands, and playing such pranks in the beginning of the 18th century as are usually ascribed to Robin Hood in the middle ages, and that within forty miles of Glasgow, a great commercial city, the seat of a learned university. Thus a character like his, blending the wild virtues, the subtle policy, and unrestrained license of an American Indian, was flourishing in Scotland during the Augustan age of Queen Anne and George I. Addison, it is probable, or Pope, would have been considerably surprised if they had known that there existed in the same island with them a personage of Rob Roy's peculiar habits and profession. It is this strong contrast betwixt the civilised and cultivated mode of life on the one side of the Highland line, and the wild and lawless adventures which were habitually undertaken and achieved by one who dwelt on the opposite side of that ideal

boundary, which creates the interest attached to his name.
Hence it is that even yet,

Far and near, through vale and hill,
Are faces that attest the same,
And kindle like a fire new stirr'd
At sound of Rob Roy's name.

There were several advantages which Rob Roy enjoyed for sustaining to advantage the character which he assumed.

The most prominent of these was his descent from, and connexion with, the Clan MacGregor, so famous for their misfortunes and the indomitable spirit with which they maintained themselves as a clan, linked and banded together in spite of the most severe laws, executed with unheard-of rigour against those who bore this forbidden surname. Their history was that of several others of the original Highland clans, who were suppressed by more powerful neighbours, and either extirpated or forced to secure themselves by renouncing their own family appellation and assuming that of the conquerors. The peculiarity in the story of the MacGregors is their retaining with such tenacity their separate existence and union as a clan under circumstances of the utmost urgency. The history of the tribe is briefly as follows: — but we must premise that the tale depends in some degree on tradition; therefore, excepting when written documents are quoted, it must be considered as in some degree dubious.

The sept of MacGregor claimed a descent from Gregor, or Gregorius, third son, it is said, of Alpin King of Scots, who flourished about 787. Hence their original patronymic is Mac-Alpine, and they are usually termed the Clan Alpine. An individual tribe of them retains the same name. They are accounted one of the most ancient clans in the Highlands, and it is certain they were a people of original Celtic descent, and occupied at one period very extensive possessions in Perthshire and Argyleshire, which they imprudently continued to hold by the *coir a glaive*, that is, the right of the sword. Their neighbours, the Earls of Argyle and Breadalbane, in the meanwhile managed to have the lands occupied by the MacGregors engrossed in those charters which they easily obtained from the Crown; and thus constituted a legal right in their own favour without much regard to its justice. As opportunity occurred of annoying or extirpating their neighbours, they gradually extended their own domains by usurping, under the pretext of

such royal grants, those of their more uncivilised neighbours. A Sir Duncan Campbell of Lochow, known in the Highlands by the name of *Donacha Dhu nan Churraichd*, that is, Black Duncan with the Cowl, it being his pleasure to wear such a head-gear, is said to have been peculiarly successful in those acts of spoliation upon the Clan MacGregor.

The devoted sept, ever finding themselves iniquitously driven from their possessions, defended themselves by force, and occasionally gained advantages, which they used cruelly enough. This conduct, though natural considering the country and time, was studiously represented at the capital as arising from an untamable and innate ferocity, which nothing, it was said, could remedy save cutting off the tribe of MacGregor root and branch.

In an Act of Privy Council at Stirling, 22d September 1563, in the reign of Queen Mary, commission is granted to the most powerful nobles and chiefs of the clans to pursue the Clan Gregor with fire and sword. A similar warrant in 1563 not only grants the like powers to Sir John Campbell of Glenorchy, the descendant of Duncan with the Cowl, but discharges the lieges to receive or assist any of the Clan Gregor, or afford them, under any colour whatever, meat, drink, or clothes.

An atrocity which the Clan Gregor committed in 1589, by the murder of John Drummond of Drummond-Ernock, a forester of the royal forest of Glenartney, is elsewhere given, with all its horrid circumstances. The clan swore upon the severed head of the murdered man that they would make common cause in avowing the deed. This led to an Act of the Privy Council, directing another crusade against the 'wicked Clan Gregor, so long continuing in blood, slaughter, theft, and robbery,' in which letters of fire and sword are denounced against them for the space of three years. The reader will find this particular fact illustrated in the Introduction to *A Legend of Montrose*, in the present edition of these Novels.

Other occasions frequently occurred in which the MacGregors testified contempt for the laws, from which they had often experienced severity, but never protection. Though they were gradually deprived of their possessions and of all ordinary means of procuring subsistence, they could not, nevertheless, be supposed likely to starve for famine while they had the means of taking from strangers what they considered as rightfully their own. Hence they became versed in predatory forays, and accustomed to bloodshed. Their passions were eager, and, with a little management on the part of some of their most

powerful neighbours, they could easily be 'hounded out,' to use an expressive Scottish phrase, to commit violence, of which the wily instigators took the advantage, and left the ignorant MacGregors an undivided portion of blame and punishment. This policy of pushing on the fierce clans of the Highlands and Borders to break the peace of the country is accounted by the historian one of the most dangerous practices of his own period, in which the MacGregors were considered as ready agents.

Notwithstanding these severe denunciations, which were acted upon in the same spirit in which they were conceived, some of the clan still possessed property, and the chief of the name in 1592 is designed Allaster MacGregor of Glenstrae. He is said to have been a brave and active man; but, from the tenor of his confession at his death, appears to have been engaged in many and desperate feuds, one of which finally proved fatal to himself and many of his followers. This was the celebrated conflict at Glenfruin, near the south-western extremity of Loch Lomond, in the vicinity of which the MacGregors continued to exercise much authority by the *coir a glaive*, or right of the strongest, which we have already mentioned.

There had been a long and bloody feud betwixt the MacGregors and the Laird of Luss, head of the family of Colquhoun, a powerful race on the lower part of Loch Lomond. The MacGregors' tradition affirms that the quarrel began on a very trifling subject. Two of the MacGregors being benighted, asked shelter in a house belonging to a dependant of the Colquhouns, and were refused. They then retreated to an out-house, took a wedder from the fold, killed it, and supped off the carcass, for which (it is said) they offered payment to the proprietor. The Laird of Luss seized on the offenders, and, by the summary process which feudal barons had at their command, had them both condemned and executed. The MacGregors verify this account of the feud by appealing to a proverb current amongst them execrating the hour (*Mult dhu an carbail ghil*) that the black wedder with the white tail was ever lambled. To avenge this quarrel the Laird of MacGregor assembled his clan, to the number of three or four hundred men, and marched towards Luss from the banks of Loch Long, by a pass called *Raid na Gael*, or the Highlandman's Pass.

Sir Humphrey Colquhoun received early notice of this incursion, and collected a strong force, more than twice the number of that of the invaders. He had with him the ge tle-

men of the name of Buchanan, with the Grahams and other gentry of the Lennox, and a party of the citizens of Dumbarton, under command of Tobias Smollett, a magistrate or bailie of that town, and ancestor of the celebrated author.

The parties met in the valley of Glenfruin, which signifies the Glen of Sorrow, a name that seemed to anticipate the event of the day, which, fatal to the conquered party, was at least equally so to the victors, the 'babe unborn' of Clan Alpine having reason to repent it. The MacGregors, somewhat discouraged by the appearance of a force much superior to their own, were cheered on to the attack by a seer or second-sighted person, who professed that he saw the shrouds of the dead wrapt around their principal opponents. The clan charged with great fury on the front of the enemy, while John MacGregor, with a strong party, made an unexpected attack on the flank. A great part of the Colquhouns' force consisted in cavalry, which could not act in the boggy ground. They were said to have disputed the field manfully, but were at length completely routed, and a merciless slaughter was exercised on the fugitives, of whom betwixt two and three hundred fell on the field and in the pursuit. If the MacGregors lost, as is averred, only two men slain in the action, they had slight provocation for an indiscriminate massacre. It is said that their fury extended itself to a party of students for clerical orders who had imprudently come to see the battle. Some doubt is thrown on this fact from the indictment against the chief of the Clan Gregor being silent on the subject, as is the historian Johnston and a Professor Ross, who wrote an account of the battle twenty-nine years after it was fought. It is, however, constantly averred by the tradition of the country, and a stone where the deed was done is called *Leck-a-Mhinisteir*, the Minister or Clerk's Flagstone. The MacGregors impute this cruel action to the ferocity of a single man of their tribe, renowned for size and strength, called Dugald Ciar Mohr, or the Great Mouse-coloured Man. He was MacGregor's foster-brother, and the chief committed the youths to his charge, with directions to keep them safely till the affray was over. Whether fearful of their escape or incensed by some sarcasms which they threw on his tribe, or whether out of mere thirst of blood, this savage, while the other MacGregors were engaged in the pursuit, poniarded his helpless and defenceless prisoners. When the chieftain, on his return, demanded where the youths were, the Ciar (pronounced 'Kiar') Mohr drew out his bloody dirk, saying in Gaelic, 'Ask

that and God save me!' The latter words allude to the exclamation which his victims used when he was murdering them. It would seem, therefore, that this horrible part of the story is founded on fact,¹ though the number of the youths so slain is probably exaggerated in the Lowland accounts. The common people say that the blood of the Ciar Mohr's victims can never be washed off the stone. When MacGregor learnt their fate he expressed the utmost horror at the deed, and upbraided his foster-brother with having done that which would occasion the destruction of him and his clan. This homicide was the ancestor of Rob Roy and the tribe from which he was descended. He lies buried at the church of Fortingal, where his sepulchre, covered with a large stone,² is still shown, and where his great strength and courage are the theme of many traditions.³

MacGregor's brother was one of the very few of the tribe who was slain. He was buried near the field of battle, and the place is marked by a rude stone, called the Grey Stone of MacGregor.

Sir Humphrey Colquhoun, being well mounted, escaped for the time to the castle of Bannoch or Bennachra. It proved no

¹ [For a later and more correct version, see a note to the Introduction to *A Legend of Montrose*.]

² I have been informed that, at no very remote period, it was proposed to take this large stone which marks the grave of Dugald Ciar Mohr and convert it to the purpose of the lintel of a window, the threshold of a door, or some such mean use. A man of the Clan MacGregor, who was somewhat deranged, took fire at this insult, and when the workmen came to remove the stone, planted himself upon it, with a broad-axe in his hand, swearing he would dash out the brains of any one who should disturb the monument. Athletic in person, and insane enough to be totally regardless of consequences, it was thought best to give way to his humour; and the poor madman kept sentinel on the stone day and night, till the proposal of removing it was entirely dropped.

³ The above is the account which I find in a manuscript history of the Clan MacGregor, of which I was indulged with a perusal by Donald MacGregor, Esq., late Major of the 33d regiment, where great pains have been taken to collect traditions and written documents concerning the family. But an ancient and constant tradition, preserved among the inhabitants of the country, and particularly those of the Clan MacFarlane, relieves Dugald Ciar Mohr of the guilt of murdering the youths, and lays the blame on a certain Donald or Duncan Lean, who performed the act of cruelty, with the assistance of a gillie who attended him, named Charlooh or Charlie. They say that the homicides dared not again join their clan, but that they resided in a wild and solitary state as outlaws in an unfrequented part of the MacFarlanes' territory. Here they lived for some time undisturbed, till they committed an act of brutal violence on two defenceless women, a mother and daughter of the MacFarlane clan. In revenge of this atrocity, the MacFarlanes hunted them down and shot them. It is said the younger ruffian, Charlooh, might have escaped, being remarkably swift of foot. But his crime became his punishment, for the ferocity with which he had outraged had defended herself desperately, and had struck him with his own dirk on the thigh. He was lame from the wound, and was the more easily overtaken and killed. I incline to think that this last is the true edition of the story, and that the guilt was transferred to Dugald Ciar Mohr as a man of higher name. Or it is possible these subordinate persons had only executed his orders. — I have learnt that Dugald Ciar Mohr was in truth dead several years before the battle, my authority being his representative, Mr. Gregorson of Ardtornish (Later Note).

sure defence, however, for he was shortly after murdered in a vault of the castle, the family annals say by the MacGregors, though other accounts charge the deed upon the MacFarlanes.

This battle of Glenfruin, and the severity which the victors exercised in the pursuit, was reported to King James VI. in a manner the most unfavourable to the Clan Gregor, whose general character, being that of lawless though brave men, could not much avail them in such a case. That James might fully understand the extent of the slaughter, the widows of the slain, to the number of eleven score, in deep mourning, riding upon white palfreys, and each bearing her husband's bloody shirt on a spear, appeared at Stirling, in presence of a monarch peculiarly accessible to such sights of fear and sorrow, to demand vengeance for the death of their husbands, upon those by whom they had been made desolate.

The remedy resorted to was at least as severe as the cruelties which it was designed to punish. By an Act of the Privy Council, dated 3d April 1603, the name of MacGregor was expressly abolished, and those who had hitherto borne it were commanded to change it for other surnames, the pain of death being denounced against those who should call themselves Gregor or MacGregor, the names of their fathers. Under the same penalty all who had been at the conflict of Glenfruin, or accessory to other marauding parties charged in the act, were prohibited from carrying weapons, except a pointless knife to eat their victuals. By a subsequent Act of Council, 24th June 1613, death was denounced against any persons of the tribe formerly called MacGregor who should presume to assemble in greater numbers than four. Again, by an Act of Parliament, 1617, Chap. 26, these laws were continued, and extended to the rising generation, in respect that great numbers of the children of those against whom the Acts of Privy Council had been directed were stated to be then approaching to maturity, who, if permitted to resume the name of their parents, would render the clan as strong as it was before.

The execution of those severe acts was chiefly entrusted in the west to the Earl of Argyle and the powerful clan of Campbell, and to the Earl of Athole and his followers in the more eastern Highlands of Perthshire. The MacGregors failed not to resist with the most determined courage; and many a valley in the West and North Highlands retains memory of the severe conflicts, in which the proscribed clan sometimes obtained transient advantages, and always sold their lives dearly. At

length the pride of Allaster MacGregor, the chief of the clan, was so much lowered by the sufferings of his people that he resolved to surrender himself to the Earl of Argyle, with his principal followers, on condition that they should be sent out of Scotland. If the unfortunate chief's own account be true, he had more reasons than one for expecting some favour from the Earl, who had in secret advised and encouraged him to many of the desperate actions for which he was now called to so severe a reckoning. But Argyle, as old Birrell expresses himself, kept a Highlandman's promise with them, fulfilling it to the ear and breaking it to the sense. MacGregor was sent under a strong guard to the frontier of England, and being thus, in the literal sense, sent out of Scotland, Argyle was judged to have kept faith with him, though the same party which took him there brought him back to Edinburgh in custody.

MacGregor of Glenstrae was tried before the Court of Justiciary, 20th January 1604, and found guilty. He appears to have been instantly conveyed from the bar to the gallows; for Birrell, of the same date, reports that he was hanged at the Cross, and, for distinction's sake, was suspended higher by his own height than two of his kindred and friends. On the 18th of February following nine more of the MacGregors were executed, after a long imprisonment, and several others in the beginning of March.

The Earl of Argyle's service, in conducting to the surrender of the insolent and wicked race and name of MacGregor, notorious liars and malefactors, and in the in-bringing of MacGregor, with a great many of the leading men of the clan, worthily executed to death for their offences, is thankfully acknowledged by Act of Parliament, 1607, Chap. 16, and rewarded with a grant of twenty chalders of victual out of the lands of Kintyre.

The MacGregors, notwithstanding the letters of fire and sword, and orders for military execution repeatedly directed against them by the Scottish legislature, who apparently lost all the calmness of conscious dignity and security, and could not even name the outlawed clan without vituperation, showed no inclination to be blotted out of the roll of clanship. They submitted to the law, indeed, so far as to take the names of the neighbouring families amongst whom they happened to live, nominally becoming, as the case might render it most convenient, Drummonds, Campbells, Grahams, Buchanans, Stewarts, and the like; but to all intents and purposes of combination

and mutual attachment they remained the Clan Gregor, united together for right or wrong, and menacing with the general vengeance of their race whomsoever committed aggressions against any individual of their number.

They continued to take and give offence with as little hesitation as before the legislative dispersion which had been attempted, as appears from the preamble to Statute 1633, chapter 30, setting forth that the Clan Gregor, which had been suppressed and reduced to quietness by the great care of the late King James of eternal memory, had nevertheless broken out again in the counties of Perth, Stirling, Clackmannan, Menteith, Lennox, Angus, and Mearns; for which reason the statute re-establishes the disabilities attached to the clan, and grants a new commission for enforcing the laws against that wicked and rebellious race.

Notwithstanding the extreme severities of King James I. and Charles I. against this unfortunate people, who were rendered furious by proscription, and then punished for yielding to the passions which had been wilfully irritated, the MacGregors to a man attached themselves during the Civil War to the cause of the latter monarch. Their bards have ascribed this to the native respect of the MacGregors for the crown of Scotland, which their ancestors once wore, and have appealed to their armorial bearings, which display a pine-tree, crossed saltire-wise with a naked sword, the point of which supports a royal crown. But, without denying that such motives may have had their weight, we are disposed to think that a war which opened the Low Country to the raids of the Clan Gregor would have more charms for them than any inducement to espouse the cause of the Covenanters, which would have brought them into contact with Highlanders as fierce as themselves, and having as little to lose. Patrick MacGregor, their leader, was the son of a distinguished chief named Duncan Abbarach, to whom Montrose wrote letters as to his trusty and special friend, expressing his reliance on his devoted loyalty with an assurance that, when once his Majesty's affairs were placed upon a permanent footing, the grievances of the Clan MacGregor should be redressed.

At a subsequent period of these melancholy times we find the Clan Gregor claiming the immunities of other tribes, when summoned by the Scottish Parliament to resist the invasion of the Commonwealth's army in 1651. On the last day of March in that year a supplication to the King and Parliament, from Calum MacCondachie Vieh Euen and Euen MacCondachie Euen,

in their own name and that of the whole name of MacGregor, set forth that, while, in obedience to the orders of Parliament, enjoining all clans to come out in the present service under their chieftains, for the defence of religion, king, and kingdoms, the petitioners were drawing their men to guard the passes at the head of the river Forth, they were interfered with by the Earl of Athole and the Laird of Buchanan, who had required the attendance of many of the Clan Gregor upon their arrays. This interference was doubtless owing to the change of name, which seems to have given rise to the claim of the Earl of Athole and the Laird of Buchanan to muster the MacGregors under their banners, as Murrays or Buchanans. It does not appear that the petition of the MacGregors to be permitted to come out in a body as other clans received any answer. But upon the Restoration, King Charles, in the first Scottish Parliament of his reign (Statute 1661, Chap. 195), annulled the various acts against the Clan Gregor, and restored them to the full use of their family name, and the other privileges of liege subjects, setting forth, as a reason for this lenity, that those who were formerly designed MacGregors had, during the late troubles, conducted themselves with such loyalty and affection to his Majesty as might justly wipe off all memory of former miscarriages, and take away all marks of reproach for the same.

It is singular enough that it seems to have aggravated the feelings of the nonconforming Presbyterians when the penalties which were most unjustly imposed upon themselves were relaxed towards the poor MacGregors : so little are the best men, any more than the worst, able to judge with impartiality of the same measures as applied to themselves or to others. Upon the Restoration [Revolution] an influence inimical to this unfortunate clan, said to be the same with that which afterwards dictated the Massacre of Glencoe, occasioned the re-enaction of the penal statutes against the MacGregors. There are no reasons given why these highly penal acts should have been renewed ; nor is it alleged that the clan had been guilty of late irregularities. Indeed, there is some reason to think that the clause was formed of set purpose in a shape which should elude observation ; for, though containing conclusions fatal to the rights of so many Scottish subjects, it is neither mentioned in the title nor the rubric of the Act of Parliament in which it occurs, and is thrown briefly in at the close of the Statutes 1693, Chap. 61, entitled, 'An Act for the Justiciary in the Highlands.'

It does not, however, appear that after the Revolution

the acts against the clan were severely enforced; and in the latter half of the 18th century they were not enforced at all. Commissioners of supply were named in Parliament by the proscribed title of MacGregor, and decrees of courts of justice were pronounced, and legal deeds entered into, under the same appellation. The MacGregors, however, while the laws continued in the statute book, still suffered under the deprivation of the name which was their birthright, and some attempts were made for the purpose of adopting another, MacAlpine or Grant being proposed as the title of the whole clan in future. No agreement, however, could be entered into; and the evil was submitted to as a matter of necessity, until full redress was obtained from the British Parliament by an act abolishing for ever the penal statutes which had been so long imposed upon this ancient race. This statute, well merited by the services of many a gentleman of the clan in behalf of their king and country, was passed, and the clan proceeded to act upon it with the same spirit of ancient times which had made them suffer severely under a deprivation that would have been deemed of little consequence by a great part of their fellow-subjects.

They entered into a deed recognising John Murray of Lanrick, Esq. (afterwards Sir John MacGregor, Baronet), representative of the family of Glencarnock, as lawfully descended from the ancient stock and blood of the Lairds and Lords of MacGregor, and therefore acknowledged him as their chief on all lawful occasions and causes whatsoever. This deed was subscribed by eight hundred and twenty-six persons of the name of MacGregor capable of bearing arms. A great many of the clan during the last war formed themselves into what was called the Clan Alpine regiment, raised in 1799, under the command of their Chief and his brother Colonel MacGregor.

Having briefly noticed the history of this clan, which presents a rare and interesting example of the indelible character of the patriarchal system, the Author must now offer some notices of the individual who gives name to this volume.

In giving an account of a Highlander, his pedigree is first to be considered. That of Rob Roy was deduced from Ciar Mohr, the Great Mouse-coloured Man, who is accused by tradition of having slain the young students at the battle of Glenfruin.

Without puzzling ourselves and our readers with the intricacies of Highland genealogy, it is enough to say that, after the death of Allaster MacGregor of Glenstrae, the clan, discouraged by the unremitting persecution of their enemies, seem not to

have had the means of placing themselves under the command of a single chief. According to their places of residence and immediate descent, the several families were led and directed by *Chieftains*, which, in the Highland acceptation, signifies the head of a particular branch of a tribe, in opposition to *Chief*, who is the leader and commander of the whole name.

The family and descendants of Dugald Ciar Mohr lived chiefly in the mountains between Loch Lomond and Loch Katrine, and occupied a good deal of property there, whether by sufferance, by the right of the sword, which it was never safe to dispute with them, or by legal titles of various kinds it would be useless to inquire and unnecessary to detail. Enough, there they certainly were; a people whom their most powerful neighbours were desirous to conciliate, their friendship in peace being very necessary to the quiet of the vicinage, and their assistance in war equally prompt and effectual.

Rob Roy MacGregor Campbell, which last name he bore in consequence of the Acts of Parliament abolishing his own, was the younger son of Donald MacGregor of Glengyle, said to have been a lieutenant-colonel (probably in the service of James II.), by his wife, a daughter of Campbell of Glenfalloch. Rob's own designation was of Inversnaid; but he appears to have acquired a right of some kind or other to the property or possession of Craig Royston, a domain of rock and forest lying on the east side of Loch Lomond, where that beautiful lake stretches into the dusky mountains of Glenfalloch.

The time of his birth is uncertain. But he is said to have been active in the scenes of war and plunder which succeeded the Revolution; and tradition affirms him to have been the leader in a predatory incursion into the parish of Kippen, in the Lennox, which took place in the year 1691. It was of almost a bloodless character, only one person losing his life; but from the extent of the depredation it was long distinguished by the name of the *Hership* (or devastation) of Kippen.¹ The time of his death is also uncertain, but, as he is said to have survived the year 1733, and died an aged man, it is probable he may have been twenty-five about the time of the *Hership* of Kippen, which would assign his birth to the middle of the 17th century.

In the more quiet times which succeeded the Revolution, Rob Roy, or Red Robert, seems to have exerted his active talents, which were of no mean order, as a drover or trader

¹ See *Statistical Account of Scotland*, vol. xviii. page 332. Parish of Kippen.

in cattle to a great extent. It may well be supposed that in those days no Lowland, much less English, drovers ventured to enter the Highlands. The cattle, which were the staple commodity of the mountains, were escorted down to fairs on the borders of the Lowlands by a party of Highlanders, with their arms rattling around them, who dealt, however, in all honour and good faith with their Southern customers. A fray, indeed, would sometimes arise, when the Lowlandmen, chiefly Borderers, who had to supply the English market, used to dip their bonnets in the next brook, and, wrapping them round their hands, oppose their cudgels to the naked broadswords, which had not always the superiority. I have heard from aged persons who had been engaged in such affrays that the Highlanders used remarkably fair play, never using the point of the sword, nor less their pistols or daggers; so that

With a stiff thwack and many a bang,
Hard came and cold iron rang.

A slash or two, or a broken head, was easily accommodated, and, as the trade was of benefit to both parties, trifling skirmishes were not allowed to interrupt its harmony. Indeed, it was of vital interest to the Highlanders, whose income, so far as derived from their estates, depended entirely on the sale of black cattle; and a sagacious and experienced dealer benefited not only himself but his friends and neighbours by his speculations. Those of Rob Roy were for several years so successful as to inspire general confidence, and raise him in the estimation of the country in which he resided.

His importance was increased by the death of his father, in consequence of which he succeeded to the management of his nephew George MacGregor's Glengyle's property, and, as his tutor, to such influence as he then and following as was due to the representative of Donald Cam. Such influence was the more uncontrolled than the family of the MacGregors seem to have refused adherence to the MacGregor of Glencarnock, the ancestor of the present Ewan MacGregor, and asserted a kind of independence.

It was at this time that Rob Roy acquired an interest by purchase, wadset, or otherwise to the property of Craig Royston already mentioned. He was in particular favour during this prosperous period of his life with his nearest and most powerful neighbour, James, first Duke of Montrose, from whom he received many marks of regard. His Grace consented to give

his nephew and himself a right of property on the estates of Cengyle and Inversnaid, which they had till then only held as kindly tenants. The Duke, also, with a view to the interest of the country and his own estate, supported our adventurer by loans of money to a considerable amount, to enable him to carry on his speculations in the cattle trade.

Unfortunately that species of commerce was and is liable to sudden fluctuations; and Rob Roy was by a sudden depression of markets, and, as a friendly tradition adds, by the bad faith of a partner named MacDonald, whom he had imprudently received into his confidence and entrusted with a considerable sum of money, rendered totally insolvent. He absconded, of course, not empty-handed, if it be true, as stated in an advertisement for his apprehension, that he had in his possession sums to the amount of £1000 sterling, obtained from several noblemen and gentlemen under pretence of purchasing cows for them in the Highlands. This advertisement appeared in June 1712, and was several times repeated. It fixes the period when Rob Roy exchanged his commercial adventures for speculations of a very different complexion.¹

He appears at this period first to have removed from his ordinary dwelling at Inversnaid ten or twelve Scots miles (which is double the number of English) farther into the Highlands, and commenced the lawless sort of life which he afterwards followed. The Duke of Montrose, who conceived himself deceived and cheated by MacGregor's conduct, employed legal means to recover the money lent to him. Rob Roy's landed property was attached by the regular form of legal procedure, and his stock and furniture made the subject of arrest and sale.

It is said that this diligence of the law, as it is called in Scotland, which the English more bluntly term distress, was used in this case with uncommon severity, and that the legal satellites, not usually the gentlest persons in the world, had insulted MacGregor's wife in a manner which would have aroused a milder man than he to thoughts of unbounded vengeance. She was a woman of fierce and haughty temper, and is not unlikely to have disturbed the officers in the execution of their duty, and thus to have incurred ill-treatment, though, for the sake of humanity, it is to be hoped that the story sometimes told is a popular exaggeration. It is certain that she felt extreme anguish at being expelled from the banks of Loch Lomond, and gave vent to her feelings in a fine piece of

¹ See Appendix No. I.

pipe-music, still well known to amateurs by the name of 'Rob Roy's Lament.'

The fugitive is thought to have found his first place of refuge in Glen Dochart, under the Earl of Breadalbane's protection; for, though that family had been active agents in the destruction of the Macgregors in former times, they had of late years sheltered a great many of the name in their old possessions. The Duke of Argyle was also one of Rob Roy's protectors, so far as to afford him, according to the Highland phrase, wood and water -- the shelter, namely, that is afforded by the forests and lakes of an inaccessible country.

The great men of the Highlands in that time, besides being anxiously ambitious to keep up what was called their 'following,' or military retainers, were also desirous to have at their disposal men of resolute character, to whom the world and the world's law were no friends, and who might at times ravage the lands or destroy the tenants of a feudal enemy, without bringing responsibility on their patrons. The strife between the names of Campbell and Graham, during the civil wars of the 17th century, had been stamped with mutual loss and inveterate enmity. The death of the great Marquis of Montrose on the one side, the defeat at Limerick and cruel plundering of Lorn on the other, were reciprocal injuries not likely to be forgotten. Rob Roy was, therefore, sure of refuge in the country of the Campbells, both as having assumed their name, as connected by his mother with the family of Glenfalloch, and as an enemy to the rival house of Montrose. The extent of Argyle's possessions, and the power of retreating thither in any emergency, gave great encouragement to the bold schemes of revenge which he had adopted.

This was nothing short of the maintenance of a predatory war against the Duke of Montrose, whom he considered as the author of his exclusion from civil society, and of the outlawry to which he had been sentenced by letters of horning and caption (legal writs so-called), as well as the seizure of his goods and adjudication of his landed property. Against his Grace, therefore, his tenants, friends, allies, and relatives he disposed himself to employ every means of annoyance in his power; and though this was a circle sufficiently extensive for active depredation, Rob, who professed himself a Jacobite, took the liberty of extending his sphere of operations against all whom he chose to consider as friendly to the revolutionary government, or to that most obnoxious of measures, the Union of the Kingdoms.

Under one or other of these pretexts all his neighbours of the Lowlands who had anything to lose, or were unwilling to compound for security by paying him an annual sum for protection or forbearance, were exposed to his ravages.

The country in which this private warfare or system of depredation was to be carried on was, until opened up by roads, in the highest degree favourable for his purpose. It was broken up into narrow valleys, the habitable part of which bore no proportion to the huge wildernesses of forest, rocks, and precipices by which they were encircled, and which was, moreover, full of inextricable passes, morasses, and natural strengths, unknown to any but the inhabitants themselves, where a few men acquainted with the ground were capable, with ordinary address, of baffling the pursuit of numbers.

The opinions and habits of the nearest neighbours to the Highland line were also highly favourable to Rob Roy's purpose. A large proportion of them were of his own clan of MacGregor, who claimed the property of Balquidder and other Highland districts as having been part of the ancient possessions of their tribe, though the harsh laws, under the severity of which they had suffered so deeply, had assigned the ownership to other families. The civil wars of the 17th century had accustomed these men to the use of arms, and they were peculiarly brave and fierce from remembrance of their sufferings. The vicinity of a comparatively rich Lowland district gave also great temptations to incursion. Many belonging to other clans, habituated to contempt of industry and to the use of arms, drew towards an unprotected frontier which promised facility of plunder; and the state of the country, now so peaceable and quiet, verified at that time the opinion which Dr. Johnson heard with doubt and suspicion, that the most disorderly and lawless districts of the Highlands were those which lay nearest to the Lowland line. There was, therefore, no difficulty in Rob Roy, descended of a tribe which was widely dispersed in the country we have described, collecting any number of followers whom he might be able to keep in action and to maintain by his proposed operations.

He himself appears to have been singularly adapted for the profession which he proposed to exercise. His stature was not of the tallest, but his person was uncommonly strong and compact. The greatest peculiarities of his frame were the breadth of his shoulders, and the great and almost disproportioned length of his arms; so remarkable, indeed, that it was said he

could, without stooping, tie the garters of his Highland hose, which are placed two inches below the knee. His countenance was open, manly, stern at periods of danger, but frank and cheerful in his hours of festivity. His hair was dark red, thick, and frizzled, and curled short around the face. His fashion of dress showed, of course, the knees and upper part of the leg, which was described to me as resembling that of a Highland bull, hirsute, with red hair, and evincing muscular strength similar to that animal. To these personal qualifications must be added a masterly use of the Highland sword, in which his length of arm gave him great advantage, and a perfect and intimate knowledge of all the recesses of the wild country in which he harboured, and the character of the various individuals, whether friendly or hostile, with whom he might come in contact.

His mental qualities seem to have been no less adapted to the circumstances in which he was placed. Though the descendant of the bloodthirsty Ciar Mohr, he inherited none of his ancestor's ferocity. On the contrary, Rob Roy avoided every appearance of cruelty, and it is not averred that he was ever the means of unnecessary bloodshed, or the actor in any deed which could lead the way to it. His schemes of plunder were contrived and executed with equal boldness and sagacity, and were almost universally successful, from the skill with which they were laid and the secrecy and rapidity with which they were executed. Like Robin Hood of England, he was a kind and gentle robber, and, while he took from the rich, was liberal in relieving the poor. This might in part be policy; but the universal tradition of the country speaks it to have arisen from a better motive. All whom I have conversed with, and I have in my youth seen some who knew Rob Roy personally, gave him the character of a benevolent and humane man 'in his way.'

His ideas of morality were those of an Arab chief, being such as naturally arose out of his wild education. Supposing Rob Roy to have argued on the tendency of the life which he pursued, whether from choice or from necessity, he would doubtless have assumed to himself the character of a brave man, who, deprived of his natural rights by the partiality of laws, endeavoured to assert them by the strong hand of natural power; and he is most felicitously described as reasoning thus, in the high-toned poetry of my gifted friend Wordsworth:

INTRODUCTION TO ROB ROY

Say, then, that he was wise as brave,
As wise in thought as bold in deed ;
For in the principles of things
He sought his moral creed.

Said generous Rob, ' What need of books ?
Burn all the statutes and their shelves !
They stir us up against our kind,
And worse, against ourselves.

' We have a passion, make a law,
Too false to guide us or control ;
And for the law itself we fight
In bitterness of soul.

' And puzzled, blinded thus, we lose
Distinctions that are plain and few ;
These find I graven on my heart,
That tells me what to do.

' The creatures see of flood and field,
And those that travel on the wind ;
With them no strife can last ; they live
In peace, and peace of mind.

' For why ? Because the good old rule
Sufficeth them : the simple plan,
That they should take who have the power,
And they should keep who can.

' A lesson which is quickly learn'd,
A signal this which all can see ;
Thus, nothing here provokes the strong
To wanton cruelty.

' All freakishness of mind is check'd,
He tamed who foolishly aspires,
While to the measure of his might
Each fashions his desires.

' All kinds and creatures stand and fall
By strength of prowess or of wit ;
'Tis God's appointment who must sway,
And who is to submit.

' Since then the rule of right is plain,
And longest life is but a day,
To have my ends, maintain my rights,
I'll take the shortest way.'

And thus among these rocks he lived,
Through summer's heat and winter's snow :
The eagle, he was lord above,
And Rob was lord below.

We are not, however, to suppose the character of this distinguished outlaw to be that of an actual hero, acting uniformly and consistently on such moral principles as the illustrious bard who, standing by his grave, has vindicated his fame. On the contrary, as is common with barbarous chiefs, Rob Roy appears to have mixed his professions of principle with a large alloy of craft and dissimulation, of which his conduct during the Civil War is sufficient proof. It is also said, and truly, that, although his courtesy was one of his strongest characteristics, yet sometimes he assumed an arrogance of manner which was not easily endured by the high-spirited men to whom it was addressed, and drew the daring outlaw into frequent disputes, from which he did not always come off with credit. From this it has been inferred that Rob Roy was more of a bully than a hero, or at least that he had, according to the common phrase, his fighting days. Some aged men who knew him well have described him also as better at a *taich-tulzie*, or scuffle within doors, than in mortal combat. The tenor of his life may be quoted to repel this charge; while, at the same time, it must be allowed that the situation in which he was placed rendered him prudently averse to maintaining quarrels where nothing was to be had save blows, and where success would have raised up against him new and powerful enemies, in a country where revenge was still considered as a duty rather than a crime. The power of commanding his passions on such occasions, far from being inconsistent with the part which MacGregor had to perform, was essentially necessary, at the period when he lived, to prevent his career from being cut short.

I may here mention one or two occasions on which Rob Roy appears to have given way in the manner alluded to. My late venerable friend, John Ramsay of Ochtertyre, alike eminent as a classical scholar and as an authentic register of the ancient history and manners of Scotland, informed me that on occasion of a public meeting at a bonfire in the town of Doune, Rob Roy gave some offence to James Edmondstone of Newton, the same gentleman who was unfortunately concerned in the slaughter of Lord Rollo (see MacLaurin's *Criminal Trials*, No. IX.), when Edmondstone compelled MacGregor to quit the town on pain of being thrown by him into the bonfire. 'I broke one of your ribs on a former occasion,' said he, 'and now, Rob, if you provoke me farther, I will break your neck.' But it must be remembered that Edmondstone was a man of consequence in the Jacobite party, as he carried the royal standard of James VII.

at the battle of Sherriffmuir, and also, that he was near the door of his own mansion-house, and probably surrounded by his friends and adherents. Rob Roy, however, suffered in reputation for retiring under such a threat.

Another well-vouched case is that of Cunningham of Boquhan.

Henry Cunningham, Esq., of Boquhan, was a gentleman of Stirlingshire, who, like many exquisites of our own time, united a natural high spirit and daring character with an affectation of delicacy of address and manners amounting to foppery.¹ He chanced to be in company with Rob Roy, who, either in contempt of Boquhan's supposed effeminacy, or because he thought him a safe person to fix a quarrel on (a point which Rob's enemies alleged he was wont to consider), insulted him so grossly that a challenge passed between them. The good-wife of the clachan had hidden Cunningham's sword, and, while he rummaged the house in quest of his own or some other, Rob Roy went to the Shielling Hill, the appointed place of combat, and paraded there with great majesty, waiting for his antagonist. In the meantime Cunningham had rummaged out an old sword, and, entering the ground of contest in all haste, rushed on the outlaw with such unexpected fury that he fairly drove him off the field, nor did he show himself in the village again for some time. Mr. MacGregor Stirling has a softened account of this anecdote in his new edition of Nimmo's *Stirlingshire*; still he records Rob Roy's discomfiture.

Occasionally Rob Roy suffered disasters and incurred great personal danger. On one remarkable occasion he was saved by the coolness of his lieutenant, Macanaleister, or Fletcher, the Little John of his band—a fine active fellow, of course, and celebrated as a marksman. It happened that MacGregor and his party had been surprised and dispersed by a superior force of horse and foot, and the word was given to 'split and squander.' Each shifted for himself, but a bold dragoon attached himself

¹ His courage and affectation of foppery were united, which is less frequently the case, with a spirit of innate modesty. He is thus described in Lord Binning's satirical verses, entitled 'Argyle's Levee'—

Six times had Harry bow'd unseen
Before he dared advance:
The Duke then, turning round well pleased,
Said, 'Sure you've been in France,
A more polite and jaunty mein
I never saw before':
Then Harry bow'd, and blush'd, and bow'd,
And strutted to the door.

See a *Collection of Original Poems*, by Scotch Gentlemen, vol. ii. page 125.

to pursuit of Rob, and, overtaking him, struck at him with his broadsword. A plate of iron in his bonnet saved the MacGregor from being cut down to the teeth; but the blow was heavy enough to bear him to the ground, crying as he fell, 'O, Mac-analeister, is there naething in her?' (*i. e.* in the gun). The trooper, at the same time exclaiming, 'D-n ye, your mother never wrought your night-cap!' had his arm raised for a second blow, when Macanaleister fired, and the ball pierced the dragoon's heart.

Such as he was, Rob Roy's progress in his occupation is thus described by a gentleman of sense and talent, who resided within the circle of his predatory wars, had probably felt their effects, and speaks of them, as might be expected, with little of the forbearance with which, from their peculiar and romantic character, they are now regarded.

'This man (Rob Roy MacGregor) who was a person of sagacity, and neither wanted stratagem nor address, having abandoned himself to all licentiousness, sett himself att the head of all the loose, vagrant, and desperate people of that clan in the west end of Perth and Stirling shires, and infested those whole countrys with thefts, robbery, and depredations. Very few who lived within his reach (that is, within the distance of a nocturnal expedition) could promise to themselves security, either to their persons or effects, without subjecting themselves to pay him a heavy and shamefull tax of *black-maill*. He at last proceeded to such a degree of audaciousness that he committed robbery, raised depredations [contributions], and resented quarrels at the head of a very considerable body of armed men, in open day, and in the face of the government.'¹

The extent and success of these depredations cannot be surprising when we consider that the scene of them was laid in a country where the general law was neither enforced nor respected.

Having recorded that the general habit of cattle-stealing had blinded even those of the better classes to the infamy of the practice, and that, as men's property consisted entirely in herds it was rendered in the highest degree precarious, Mr. Graham adds—On these accounts there is no culture of ground, no improvement of pastures, and, from the same reasons, no manufactures, no trade; in short, no industry. The people are extremely prolific, and therefore so numerous that there is not business in that country, according to its present order and economy, for the one-half of them. Every place is full of

¹ Mr. Graham of Gartmore's *Causes of the Disturbances in the Highlands*. See Jamieson's edition of Burt's *Letters from the North of Scotland*, Appendix, vol. II. p. 348.

idle people, accustomed to arms, and lazy in everything but rapines and depredations. As *buddiell* or *aque-rite* houses are to be found everywhere through the country, so in these they saunter away their time, and frequently consume the returns of their illegal purchases. Here the laws have never been executed, nor the authority of the magistrate ever established. Here the officer of the law neither dare nor can execute his duty, and several places are above thirty miles from lawful persons. In short, here is no order, no authority, no government.

The period of the Rebellion, 1715, approached soon after Rob Roy had attained celebrity. His Jacobite partialities were now placed in opposition to his sense of the obligations which he owed to the indirect protection of the Duke of Argyle. But the desire of 'drowning his sounding steps amid the din of general war' induced him to join the forces of the Earl of Mar, although his patron, the Duke of Argyle, was at the head of the army opposed to the Highland insurgents.

The MacGregors, a large sept of them at least, that of Ciar Mohr, on this occasion were not commanded by Rob Roy, but by his nephew already mentioned, Gregor MacGregor, otherwise called James Graham of Glengyle, and still better remembered by the Gaelic epithet of *Ghlune Dhu*, i. e. Black Knee, from a black spot on one of his knees, which his Highland garb rendered visible. There can be no question, however, that, being then very young, Glengyle must have acted on most occasions by the advice and direction of so experienced a leader as his uncle.

The MacGregors assembled in numbers at that period, and began even to threaten the Lowlands towards the lower extremity of Loch Lomond. They suddenly seized all the boats which were upon the lake, and, probably with a view to some enterprise of their own, drew them overland to Inversnaid, in order to intercept the progress of a large body of west-country Whigs who were in arms for the government, and moving in that direction.

The Whigs made an excursion for the recovery of the boats. Their forces consisted of volunteers from Paisley, Kilpatrick, and elsewhere, who, with the assistance of a body of seamen, were towed up the river Leven in long-boats belonging to the ships of war then lying in the Clyde. At Luss they were joined by the forces of Sir Humphrey Colquhoun and James Grant, his son-in-law, with their followers, attired in the

Highland dress of the period, which is picturesquely described.¹ The whole party crossed to Craig Royston, but the MacGregors did not offer combat. If we are to believe the account of the expedition given by the historian Rae, they leaped on shore at Craig Royston with the utmost intrepidity, no enemy appearing to oppose them, and, by the noise of their drums, which they beat incessantly, and the discharge of their artillery and small-arms, terrified the MacGregors, whom they appear never to have seen, out of their fastnesses, and caused them to fly in a panic to the general camp of the Highlanders at Strath Fillan. The low-country men succeeded in getting possession of the boats, at a great expenditure of noise and courage, and little risk of danger.

After this temporary removal from his old haunts, Rob Roy was sent by the Earl of Mar to Aberdeen, to raise, it is believed, a part of the Clan Gregor which is settled in that country. These men were of his own family (the race of the Ciar Mohr). They were the descendants of about three hundred MacGregors whom the Earl of Murray, about the year 1624, transported from his estates in Menteith to oppose against his enemies the Mac-Intoshes, a race as hardy and restless as they were themselves.

But while in the city of Aberdeen Rob Roy met a relation of a very different class and character from those whom he was sent to summon to arms. This was Dr. James Gregory (by descent a MacGregor), the patriarch of a dynasty of professors

¹ 'At night they arrived at Luss, where they were joined by Sir Humphray Colquhoun of Luss, and James Grant of Pluscarden, his son-in-law, followed by 40 or 50 stately fellows in their short hose and belted plaids, armed each of them with a well-fixed gun on his shoulder, a strong handsome target, with a sharp-pointed steel of above half an ell in length screwed into the navel of it, on his left arm, a sturdy claymore by his side, and a pistol or two, with a durk and knife, on his belt.' The Loch Lomond expedition was judged worthy to form a separate pamphlet, which I have not seen, but, as quoted by the historian Rae, it must be delectable. 'On the morrow, being Thursday the 13th, they went on in their expedition, and about noon came to Innersnaat [Inversnaid], the place of danger, where the Pasley men and those of Dumbarton, and several of the other companies, to the number of 100 men, with the greatest intrepidity leapt on shore, got up to the top of the mountains, and stood a considerable time, beating their drums all the while; but no enemy appearing, they went in quest of their boats, which the rebels had seized, and having casually lighted on some ropes, anchors, and oars hid among the shrubs, at length they found the boats drawn up a good way on the land, which they hurled down to the loch. Such of them as were not damaged they carried off with them, and such as were they sunk or hewed in pieces. That same night they returned to Luss, and thence next day to Dumbarton, from whence they had first set out, bringing along with them the whole boats they found in their way on either side of the loch, and in the creeks of the isles, and moored them under the cannon of the castle. During this expedition the pinnaces discharging their pateraroes, and the men their small-arms, made such a thundering noise, through the multiplied rebounding echoes of the vast mountains on both sides of the loch, that the MacGregours were cowed and frightened away to the rest of the rebels who were encamped at Strathphillan [Strath Fillan].' — Rae's *History of the Rebellion*, 4to, p. 287.

distinguished for literary and scientific talent, and the grandfather of the late eminent physician and accomplished scholar, Professor Gregory of Edinburgh. This gentleman was at the time Professor of Medicine in King's College, Aberdeen, and son of Dr. James Gregory, distinguished in science as the inventor of the reflecting telescope. With such a family it may seem our friend Rob could have had little communion. But civil war is a species of misery which introduces men to strange bedfellows. Dr. Gregory thought it a point of prudence to claim kindred at so critical a period with a man so formidable and influential. He invited Rob Roy to his house, and treated him with so much kindness that he produced in his generous bosom a degree of gratitude which seemed likely to occasion very inconvenient effects.

The Professor had a son about eight or nine years old, a lively, stout boy of his age, with whose appearance our Highland Robin Hood was much taken. On the day before his departure from the house of his learned relative, Rob Roy, who had pondered deeply how he might requite his cousin's kindness, took Dr. Gregory aside and addressed him to this purport: 'My dear kinsman, I have been thinking what I could do to show my sense of your hospitality. Now, here you have a fine spirited boy of a son, whom you are ruining by cramming him with your useless book-learning, and I am determined, by way of manifesting my great good-will to you and yours, to take him with me and make a man of him.' The learned Professor was utterly overwhelmed when his warlike kinsman announced his kind purpose, in language which implied no doubt of its being a proposal which would be, and ought to be, accepted with the utmost gratitude. The task of apology or explanation was of a most delicate description; and there might have been considerable danger in suffering Rob Roy to perceive that the promotion with which he threatened the son was, in the father's eyes, the ready road to the gallows. Indeed, every excuse which he could at first think of, such as regret for putting his friend to trouble with a youth who had been educated in the Lowlands, and so on, only strengthened the chieftain's inclination to patronise his young kinsman, as he supposed they arose entirely from the modesty of the father. He would for a long time take no apology, and even spoke of carrying off the youth by a certain degree of kindly violence, whether his father consented or not. At length the perplexed Professor pleaded that his son was very young, and in an infirm

state of health, and not yet able to endure the hardships of a mountain life ; but that in another year or two he hoped his health would be firmly established, and he would be in a fitting condition to attend on his brave kinsman, and follow out the splendid destinies to which he opened the way. This agreement being made, the cousins parted — Rob Roy pledging his honour to carry his young relation to the hills with him on his next return to Aberdeenshire, and Dr. Gregory, doubtless, praying in his secret soul that he might never see Rob's Highland face again.

James Gregory, who thus escaped being his kinsman's recruit, and in all probability his henchman, was afterwards Professor of Medicine in the College, and, like most of his family, distinguished by his scientific acquirements. He was rather of an irritable and pertinacious disposition ; and his friends were wont to remark, when he showed any symptom of these foibles, ' Ah ! this comes of not having been educated by Rob Roy.'

The connexion between Rob Roy and his classical kinsman did not end with the period of Rob's transient power. At a period considerably subsequent to the year 1715 he was walking in the Castle Street of Aberdeen arm-in-arm with his host, Dr. James Gregory, when the drums in the barracks suddenly beat to arms, and soldiers were seen issuing from the barracks. ' If these lads are turning out,' said Rob, taking leave of his cousin with great composure, ' it is time for me to look after my safety.' So saying, he dived down a close, and, as John Bunyan says, ' went upon his way and was seen no more.'¹

We have already stated that Rob Roy's conduct during the insurrection of 1715 was very equivocal. His person and followers were in the Highland army, but his heart seems to have been with the Duke of Argyle's. Yet the insurgents were constrained to trust to him as their only guide when they marched from Perth towards Dumblane, with the view of crossing the Forth at what are called the Fords of Frew, and when they themselves said he could not be relied upon.

This movement to the westward on the part of the insurgents brought on the battle of Sherrifmuir, indecisive indeed in its immediate results, but of which the Duke of Argyle

¹ The first of these anecdotes, which brings the highest pitch of civilization so closely in contact with the half-savage state of society, I have heard told by the late distinguished Dr. Gregory : and the members of his family have had the kindness to collate the story with their recollections and family documents, and furnish the authentic particulars. The second rests on the recollection of an old man, who was present when Rob took French leave of his literary cousin on hearing the drums beat, and communicated the circumstance to Mr. Alexander Forbes, a connexion of Dr. Gregory by marriage, who is still alive.

reaped the whole advantage. In this action it will be recollected that the right wing of the Highlanders broke and cut to pieces Argyle's left wing, while the clans on the left of Mar's army, though consisting of Stewarts, Mackenzies, and Camerons, were completely routed. During this medley of flight and pursuit, Rob Roy retained his station on a hill in the centre of the Highland position; and, though it is said his attack might have decided the day, he could not be prevailed upon to charge. This was the more unfortunate for the insurgents, as the leading of a party of the Macphersons had been committed to MacGregor. This, it is said, was owing to the age and infirmity of the chief of that name, who, unable to lead his clan in person, objected to his heir-apparent, Macpherson of Nord, discharging his duty on that occasion; so that the tribe, or a part of them, were brigaded with their allies the MacGregors. While the favourable moment for action was gliding away unemployed, Mar's positive orders reached Rob Roy that he should presently attack. To which he coolly replied, 'No, no! if they cannot do it without me, they cannot do it with me.' One of the Macphersons, named Alexander, one of Rob's original profession, *videlicet* a drover, but a man of great strength and spirit, was so incensed at the inactivity of his temporary leader that he threw off his plaid, drew his sword, and called out to his clansmen, 'Let us endure this no longer! if he will not lead you, I will.' Rob Roy replied, with great coolness, 'Were the question about driving Highland stots or kyloes, Sandie, I would yield to your superior skill; but, as it respects the leading of men, I must be allowed to be the better judge.' 'Did the matter respect driving Glen-Eigas stots,' answered the Macpherson, 'the question with Rob would not be, which was to be last, but which was to be foremost.' Incensed at this sarcasm, MacGregor drew his sword, and they would have fought upon the spot if their friends on both sides had not interfered. But the moment of attack was completely lost. Rob did not, however, neglect his own private interest on the occasion. In the confusion of an undecided field of battle he enriched his followers by plundering the baggage and the dead on both sides.

The fine old satirical ballad on the battle of Sherrifmuir does not forget to stigmatise our hero's conduct on this memorable occasion.

Rob Roy he stood watch
On a hill for to catch
The booty, for aught that I saw, man;

For he ne'er advanced
 From the place where he stanced,
 Till aae mair was to do there at a', man.

Notwithstanding the sort of neutrality which Rob Roy had contrived to observe during the progress of the Rebellion, he did not escape some of its penalties. He was included in the act of attainder, and the house in Breadalbane, which was his place of retreat, was burned by General Lord Cadogan, when, after the conclusion of the insurrection, he marched through the Highlands to disarm and punish the offending clans. But, upon going to Inverary with about forty or fifty of his followers, Rob obtained favour, by an apparent surrender of their arms to Col. Patrick Campbell of Finab, who furnished them and their leader with protections under his hand. Being thus in a great measure secured from the resentment of government, Rob Roy established his residence at Craig Royston, near Loch Lomond, in the midst of his own kinsmen, and lost no time in resuming his private quarrel with the Duke of Montrose. For this purpose he soon got on foot as many men, and well armed too, as he had yet commanded. He never stirred without a body-guard of ten or twelve picked followers, and without much effort could increase them to fifty or sixty.

The Duke was not wanting in efforts to destroy this troublesome adversary. His Grace applied to General Carpenter, commanding the forces in Scotland, and by his orders three parties of soldiers were directed from the three different points of Glasgow, Stirling, and Finlarig, near Killin. Mr. Graham of Killearn, the Duke of Montrose's relation and factor, sheriff-depute also of Dumbartonshire, accompanied the troops, that they might act under the civil authority, and have the assistance of a trusty guide well acquainted with the hills. It was the object of these several columns to arrive about the same time in the neighbourhood of Rob Roy's residence and surprise him and his followers. But heavy rains, the difficulties of the country, and the good intelligence which the outlaw was always supplied with, disappointed their well-concerted combination. The troops, finding the birds were flown, avenged themselves by destroying the nest. They burned Rob Roy's house, though not with impunity, for the MacGregors, concealed among the thickets and cliffs, fired on them and killed a grenadier.

Rob Roy avenged himself for the loss which he sustained on this occasion by an act of singular audacity. About the middle of November 1716 John Graham of Killearn, already mentioned

as factor of the Montrose family, went to a place called Chapel Errock, where the tenants of the Duke were summoned to appear with their termly rents. They appeared accordingly, and the factor had received ready money to the amount of about £300 when Rob Roy entered the room at the head of an armed party. The steward endeavoured to protect the Duke's property by throwing the books of accounts and money into a garret, trusting they might escape notice. But the experienced freebooter was not to be baffled where such a prize was at stake. He recovered the books and cash, placed himself calmly in the receipt of custom, examined the accounts, pocketed the money, and gave receipts on the Duke's part, saying he would hold reckoning with the Duke of Montrose out of the damages which he had sustained by his Grace's means, in which he included the losses he had suffered, as well by the burning of his house by General Cadogan as by the later expedition against Craig Royston. He then requested Mr. Graham to attend him; nor does it appear that he treated him with any personal violence, or even rudeness, although he informed him he regarded him as a hostage, and menaced rough usage in case he should be pursued, or in danger of being overtaken. Few more audacious feats have been performed. After some rapid changes of place (the fatigue attending which was the only annoyance that Mr. Graham seems to have complained of), he carried his prisoner to an island on Loch Katrine, and caused him to write to the Duke, to state that his ransom was fixed at 3400 merks, being the balance which MacGregor pretended remained due to him, after deducting all that he owed to the Duke of Montrose.

However, after detaining Mr. Graham five or six days in custody on the island, which is still called Rob Roy's Prison, and could be no comfortable dwelling for November nights, the outlaw seems to have despaired of attaining further advantage from his bold attempt, and suffered his prisoner to depart uninjured, with the account books and bills granted by the tenants, taking especial care to retain the cash.¹

Other pranks are told of Rob, which argue the same boldness and sagacity as the seizure of Killearn.² The Duke of Montrose, weary of his insolence, procured a quantity of arms and distributed them among his tenantry, in order that

¹ The reader will find two original letters of the Duke of Montrose, with that which Mr. Graham of Killearn despatched from his prison-house by the outlaw's command, in the Appendix No. II.

² About 1717 our Chieftain had the dangerous adventure of falling into the hands of the Duke of Athole, almost as much his enemy as the Duke of Montrose himself; but his cunning and dexterity again freed him from certain death. See Appendix No. VII.

they might defend themselves against future violence. But they fell into different hands from those they were intended for. The MacGregors made separate attacks on the houses of the tenants, and disarmed them all one after another, not, as was supposed, without the consent of many of the persons so disarmed.

As a great part of the Duke's rents were payable in kind, there were *girnels* (granaries) established for storing up the corn at Moulin, and elsewhere on the Buchanan estate. To these storehouses Rob Roy used to repair with a sufficient force, and of course when he was least expected, and insist upon the delivery of quantities of grain, sometimes for his own use and sometimes for the assistance of the country people, always giving regular receipts in his own name, and pretending to reckon with the Duke for what sums he received.

In the meanwhile a garrison was established by government, the ruins of which may be still seen about half-way betwixt Loch Lomond and Loch Katrine, upon Rob Roy's original property of Inversnaid. Even this military establishment could not bridle the restless MacGregor. He contrived to surprise the little fort, disarm the soldiers, and destroy the fortification. It was afterwards re-established, and again taken by the MacGregors under Rob Roy's nephew, Ghlune Dhu, previous to the insurrection of 1745-46. Finally, the fort of Inversnaid was a third time repaired after the extinction of civil discord; and when we find the celebrated General Wolfe commanding in it, the imagination is strongly affected by the variety of time and events which the citadel brings simultaneously to recollection. It is now totally dismantled.¹

It was not, strictly speaking, as a professed depredator that Rob Roy now conducted his operations, but as a sort of contractor for the police — in Scottish phrase, a lifter of black-mail. The nature of this contract has been described in the Novel of *Waverley*, and in the notes [13, 16] on that work. Mr. Graham of Gartmore's description of the character may be here transcribed:—

'The confusion and disorders of that country were so great, and the government so absolutely neglected it, that the sober people there were obliged to purchase some security to their effects by shameful and ignominious contracts of *black-mail*. A person who had the greatest correspond-

¹ About 1792, when the Author chanced to pass that way while on a tour through the Highlands, a garrison, consisting of a single veteran, was still maintained at Inversnaid. The venerable warder was reaping his barley croft in all peace and tranquillity; and when we asked admittance to repose ourselves, he told us we would find the key of 'the fort' under the door.

ence with the thieves was agreed with to preserve the lands contracted for from thefts, for certain sums to be paid yearly out of these lands. Upon this fund he employed one half of the thieves to recover stolen cattle, and the other half of them to steal, in order to make this agreement and black-maill contract necessary. The estates of these gentlemen who refused to contract, or give countenance to that pernicious practice, are plundered by the thieving part of the watch, in order to force them to purchase their protection. Their leader calls himself the *Captain of the Watch*, and his banditti go by that name. And as this gives them a kind of authority to traverse the country, so it makes them capable of doing much mischief. These different odd kinds of corps through the Highlands make altogether a very considerable body of men, inured from their infancy to the greatest fatigues, and so are capable to act in a military way when occasion offers.

'People who are ignorant and enthusiastick, who are in absolute dependence upon their chief or landlord, who are directed in their consciences by Roman Catholick priests or nonjuring clergymen, and who are not masters of any property, may easily be formed into any mould. They fear no dangers, as they have nothing to lose, and so can with ease be induced to attempt anything. Nothing can make their condition worse; confusions and troubles do commonly indulge them in such licentiousness as by these they better it.'¹

As the practice of contracting for black-mail was an obvious encouragement to rapine, and a great obstacle to the course of justice, it was, by the Statute 1567, Chap. 21, declared a capital crime, both on the part of him who levied and him who paid this sort of tax. But the necessity of the case prevented the execution of this severe law, I believe, in any one instance; and men went on submitting to a certain unlawful imposition rather than run the risk of utter ruin, just as it is now found difficult or impossible to prevent those who have lost a very large sum of money by robbery from compounding with the felons for restoration of a part of their booty.

At what rate Rob Roy levied black-mail I never heard stated; but there is a formal contract by which his nephew, in 1741, agreed with various landholders of estates in the counties of Perth, Stirling, and Dumbarton, to recover cattle stolen from them, or to pay the value within six months of the loss being intimated, if such intimation were made to him with sufficient despatch, in consideration of a payment of £5 on each £100 of valued rent, which was not a very heavy insurance. Petty thefts were not included in the contract; but the theft of one horse or one head of black cattle, or of sheep exceeding the number of six, fell under the agreement.

Rob Roy's profits upon such contracts brought him in a

¹ *Letters from the North of Scotland*, vol. II. pp. 344-45.

considerable revenue in money or cattle, of which he made a popular use; for he was publicly liberal as well as privately beneficent. The minister of the parish of Balquidder, whose name was Robison, was at one time threatening to pursue the parish for an augmentation of his stipend. Rob Roy took an opportunity to assure him that he would do well to abstain from this new exaction, a hint which the minister did not fail to understand. But, to make him some indemnification, MacGregor presented him every year with a cow and a fat sheep; and no scruples as to the mode in which the donor came by them are said to have affected the reverend gentleman's conscience.

The following account of the proceedings of Rob Roy, on an application to him from one of his contractors, had in it something very interesting to me, as told by an old countryman in the Lennox who was present on the expedition. But as there is no point or marked incident in the story, and as it must necessarily be without the half-frightened, half-bewildered look with which the narrator accompanied his recollections, it may possibly lose its effect when transferred to paper.

My informant stated himself to have been a lad of fifteen, living with his father on the estate of a gentleman in the Lennox, whose name I have forgotten, in the capacity of herd. On a fine morning in the end of October, the period when such calamities were almost always to be apprehended, they found the Highland thieves had been down upon them, and swept away ten or twelve head of cattle. Rob Roy was sent for, and came with a party of seven or eight armed men. He heard with great gravity all that could be told him of the circumstances of the creagh, and expressed his confidence that the herd-widdiefows could not have carried their booty far, and that he should be able to recover them. He desired that two Lowlanders should be sent on the party, as it was not to be expected that any of his gentlemen would take the trouble of driving the cattle when he should recover possession of them. My informant and his father were despatched on the expedition. They had no good-will to the journey; nevertheless, provided with a little food and with a dog to help them to manage the cattle, they set off with MacGregor. They travelled a long day's journey in the direction of the mountain Benvoirlich, and slept for the night in a ruinous hut or bothy. The next morning they resumed their journey among the hills, Rob Roy directing their course by signs and marks on the heath, which my informant did not understand.

About noon Rob commanded the armed party to halt, and to lie couched in the heather where it was thickest. 'Do you and your son,' he said to the oldest Lowlander, 'go boldly over the hill. You will see beneath you, in a glen on the other side, your master's cattle feeding, it may be, with others; gather your own together, taking care to disturb no one else, and drive them to this place. If any one speak to or threaten you, tell them that I am here, at the head of twenty men.' 'But what if they abuse us, or kill us?' said the Lowland peasant, by no means delighted at finding the embassy imposed on him and his son. 'If they

do you any wrong,' said Rob, 'I will never forgive them as long as I live.' The Lowlander was by no means content with this security, but did not think it safe to dispute Rob's injunctions.

He and his son climbed the hill, therefore, found a deep valley, where there grazed, as Rob had predicted, a large herd of cattle. They cautiously selected those which their master had lost, and took measures to drive them over the hill. As soon as they began to remove them they were surprised by hearing cries and screams; and, looking around in fear and trembling, they saw a woman, seeming to have started out of the earth, who flyted at them, that is, scolded them, in Gaelic. When they contrived, however, in the best Gaelic they could muster, to deliver the message Rob Roy told them, she became silent, and disappeared without offering them any further annoyance. The chief heard their story on their return, and spoke with great complacency of the art which he possessed of putting such things to rights without any unpleasant bustle. The party were now on their road home, and the danger, though not the fatigue, of the expedition was at an end.

They drove on the cattle with little repose until it was nearly dark, when Rob proposed to halt for the night upon a wide moor, across which a cold north-east wind, with frost on its wing, was whistling to the tune of the Pipers of Strath-Dearn.¹ The Highlanders, sheltered by their plaids, lay down in the heath comfortably enough, but the Lowlanders had no protection whatever. Rob Roy, observing this, directed one of his followers to afford the old man a portion of his plaid; 'for the callant (boy), he may,' said the freebooter, 'keep himself warm by walking about and watching the cattle.' My informant heard this sentence with no small distress; and, as the frost wind grew more and more cutting, it seemed to freeze the very blood in his young veins. He had been exposed to weather all his life, he said, but never could forget the cold of that night; in so much that, in the bitterness of his heart, he cursed the bright moon for giving no heat with so much light. At length the sense of cold and weariness became so intolerable that he resolved to desert his watch to seek some repose and shelter. With that purpose he conched himself down behind one of the most bulky of the Highlanders, who acted as lieutenant to the party. Not satisfied with having secured the shelter of the man's large person, he coveted a share of his plaid, and by imperceptible degrees drew a corner of it round him. He was now comparatively in paradise, and slept sound till daybreak, when he awoke and was terribly afraid on observing that his nocturnal operations had altogether uncovered the duinhé-wassel's neck and shoulders, which, lacking the plaid which should have protected them, were covered with *cranreuch* (i.e. hoar frost). The lad rose in great dread of a beating at least, when it should be found how luxuriously he had been accommodated at the expense of a principal person of the party. Good Mr. Lieutenant, however, got up and shook himself, rubbing off the hoar frost with his plaid, and muttering something of a 'cauld neight.' They then drove on the cattle, which were restored to their owner without farther adventure. The above can hardly be termed a tale, but yet it contains materials both for the poet and artist.

It was perhaps about the same time that, by a rapid march into the Balquidder hills at the head of a body of his own

¹ The winds which sweep a wild glen in Badenoch are so called.

tenantry, the Duke of Montrose actually surprised Rob Roy and made him prisoner. He was mounted behind one of the Duke's followers, named James Stewart, and made fast to him by a horse-girth. The person who had him thus in charge was grandfather of the intelligent man of the same name, now deceased, who lately kept the inn in the vicinity of Loch Katrine, and acted as a guide to visitors through that beautiful scenery. From him I learned the story many years before he was either a publican or a guide, except to moorfowl shooters. It was evening (to resume the story), and the Duke was pressing on to lodge his prisoner, so long sought after in vain, in some place of security, when, in crossing the Teith or Forth, I forget which, MacGregor took an opportunity to conjure Stewart, by all the ties of old acquaintance and good-neighbourhood, to give him some chance of an escape from an assured doom. Stewart was moved with compassion, perhaps with fear. He slipped the girth-buckle, and Rob, dropping down from behind the horse's croupe, dived, swam, and escaped, pretty much as described in the Novel. When James Stewart came on shore, the Duke hastily demanded where his prisoner was; and, as no distinct answer was returned, instantly suspected Stewart's connivance at the escape of the outlaw, and, drawing a steel pistol from his belt, struck him down with a blow on the head, from the effects of which, his descendant said, he never completely recovered.

In the success of his repeated escapes from the pursuit of his powerful enemy, Rob Roy at length became wanton and facetious. He wrote a mock challenge to the Duke, which he circulated among his friends to amuse them over a bottle. The reader will find this document in Appendix III. It is written in a good hand, and not particularly deficient in grammar or spelling. Our Southern readers must be given to understand that it was a piece of humour—a quip, in short—on the part of the outlaw, who was too sagacious to propose such a *rencontre* in reality. This letter was written in the year 1719.

In the following year Rob Roy composed another epistle, very little to his own reputation, as he therein confesses having played booty during the civil war of 1715. It is addressed to General Wade, at that time engaged in disarming the Highland clans and making military roads through the country. The letter is a singular composition.¹ It sets out the writer's real and unfeigned desire to have offered his service to King George, but for his liability to be thrown into jail for a civil debt, at

¹ Appendix No. IV.

the instance of the Duke of Montrose. Being thus debarred from taking the right side, he acknowledged he embraced the wrong one, upon Falstaff's principle, that, since the king wanted men and the rebels soldiers, it were worse shame to be idle in such stirring world than to embrace the worst side, were it as black as rebellion could make it. The impossibility of his being neutral in such a debate Rob seems to lay down as an undeniable proposition. At the same time, while he acknowledges having been forced into an unnatural rebellion against King George, he pleads that he not only avoided acting offensively against his Majesty's forces on all occasions, but, on the contrary, sent to them what intelligence he could collect from time to time; for the truth of which he refers to his Grace the Duke of Argyle. What influence this plea had on General Wade we have no means of knowing.

Rob Roy appears to have continued to live very much as usual. His fame, in the meanwhile, passed beyond the narrow limits of the country in which he resided. A pretended history of him appeared in London during his lifetime, under the title of *The Highland Rogue*. It is a catch-penny publication, bearing in front the effigy of a species of ogre, with a beard of a foot in length; and his actions are as much exaggerated as his personal appearance. Some few of the best known adventures of the hero are told, though with little accuracy; but the greater part of the pamphlet is entirely fictitious. It is great pity so excellent a theme for a narrative of the kind had not fallen into the hands of De Foe, who was engaged at the time on subjects somewhat similar, though inferior in dignity and interest.

As Rob Roy advanced in years he became more peaceable in his habits, and his nephew Ghlune Dhu, with most of his tribe, renounced those peculiar quarrels with the Duke of Montrose by which his uncle had been distinguished. The policy of that great family had latterly been rather to attach this wild tribe by kindness than to follow the mode of violence which had been hitherto ineffectually resorted to. Leases at a low rent were granted to many of the MacGregors, who had heretofore held possessions in the Duke's Highland property merely by occupancy; and Glengyle (or Black Knee), who continued to act as collector of black-mail, managed his police as a commander of the Highland watch arrayed at the charge of government. He is said to have strictly abstained from the open and lawless depredations which his kinsman had practised.

It was probably after this state of temporary quiet had been obtained that Rob Roy began to think of the concerns of his future state. He had been bred, and long professed himself, a Protestant; but in his later years he embraced the Roman Catholic faith — perhaps on Mrs. Cole's principle, that it was a comfortable religion for one of his calling. He is said to have alleged as the cause of his conversion a desire to gratify the noble family of Perth, who were then strict Catholics. Having, as he observed, assumed the name of the Duke of Argyle, his first protector, he could pay no compliment worth the Earl of Perth's acceptance save complying with his mode of religion. Rob did not pretend, when pressed closely on the subject, to justify all the tenets of Catholicism, and acknowledged that extreme unction always appeared to him a great waste of *ulyie*, or oil.¹

In the last years of Rob Roy's life his clan was involved in a dispute with one more powerful than themselves. Stewart of Appin, a chief of the tribe so named, was proprietor of a hill-farm in the Braes of Balquidder, called Invernenty. The MacGregors of Rob Roy's tribe claimed a right to it by ancient occupancy, and declared they would oppose to the uttermost the settlement of any person upon the farm not being of their own name. The Stewarts came down with two hundred men, well armed, to do themselves justice by main force. The MacGregors took the field, but were unable to muster an equal strength. Rob Roy, finding himself the weaker party, asked a parley, in which he represented that both clans were friends to the *King*, and that he was unwilling they should be weakened by mutual conflict, and thus made a merit of surrendering to Appin the disputed territory of Invernenty. Appin, accordingly, settled as tenants there, at an easy quit-rent, the MacLarens, a family dependent on the Stewarts, and from whose character for strength and bravery it was expected that they would make their right good if annoyed by the MacGregors. When all this had been amicably adjusted, in presence of the two clans drawn up in arms near the Kirk of Balquidder, Rob Roy, apparently fearing his tribe might be thought to have conceded too much upon the occasion, stepped forward and said that, where so many gallant men were met in arms, it would be shameful to part without a trial of skill, and therefore he took the freedom to invite any gentleman of the Stewarts present to exchange a

¹ Such an admission is ascribed to the robber, Donald Bean Lean, in *Waverley*, chap. lxii.

few blows with him for the honour of their respective clans. The brother-in-law of Appin, and second chieftain of the clan, Alaster Stewart of Invernahyle, accepted the challenge, and they encountered with broadsword and target before their respective kinsmen.¹ The combat lasted till Rob received a slight wound in the arm, which was the usual termination of such a combat when fought for honour only, and not with a mortal purpose. Rob Roy dropped his point and congratulated his adversary on having been the first man who ever drew blood from him. The victor generously acknowledged that, without the advantage of youth and the agility accompanying it, he probably could not have come off with advantage.

This was probably one of Rob Roy's last exploits in arms. The time of his death is not known with certainty, but he is generally said to have survived 1733, and to have died an aged man. When he found himself approaching his final change, he expressed some contrition for particular parts of his life. His wife laughed at these scruples of conscience, and exhorted him to die like a man, as he had lived. In reply, he rebuked her for her violent passions, and the counsels she had given him. 'You have put strife,' he said, 'betwixt me and the best men of the country, and now you would place enmity between me and my God.'

There is a tradition, no way inconsistent with the former, if the character of Rob Roy be justly considered, that, while on his death-bed, he learned that a person with whom he was at enmity proposed to visit him. 'Raise me from my bed,' said the invalid; 'throw my plaid around me, and bring me my claymore, dirk, and pistols; it shall never be said that a foeman saw Rob Roy MacGregor defenceless and unarmed.' His foe-man, conjectured to be one of the MacLarens before and after mentioned, entered and paid his compliments, inquiring after the health of his formidable neighbour. Rob Roy maintained a cold, haughty civility during their short conference, and so soon as he had left the house, 'Now,' he said, 'all is over; let the piper play *Ha til mi tulidh* (We return no more)'—and he is said to have expired before the dirge was finished.

This singular man died in bed in his own house, in the parish of Balquidder. He was buried in the churchyard of the same

¹ Some accounts state that Appin himself was Rob Roy's antagonist on this occasion. My recollection, from the account of Invernahyle himself, was as stated in the text. But the period when I received the information is now so distant that it is possible I may be mistaken. Invernahyle was rather of low stature, but very well made, athletic, and an excellent swordsman.

parish, where his tombstone is only distinguished by a rude attempt at the figure of a broadsword.

The character of Rob Roy is, of course, a mixed one. His sagacity, boldness and prudence, qualities so highly necessary to success in war, became in some degree vices from the manner in which they were employed. The circumstances of his education, however, must be admitted as some extenuation of his habitual transgressions against the law; and for his political tergiversations he might in that distracted period plead the example of men far more powerful, and less excusable in becoming the sport of circumstances, than the poor and desperate outlaw. On the other hand, he was in the constant exercise of virtues the more meritorious as they seem inconsistent with his general character. Pursuing the occupation of a predatory chieftain — in modern phrase, a captain of banditti — Rob Roy was moderate in his revenge and humane in his successes. No charge of cruelty or bloodshed, unless in battle, is brought against his memory. In like manner the formidable outlaw was the friend of the poor, and, to the utmost of his ability, the support of the widow and the orphan, kept his word when pledged, and died lamented in his own wild country, where there were hearts grateful for his beneficence, though their minds were not sufficiently instructed to appreciate his errors.

The Author perhaps ought to stop here; but the fate of a part of Rob Roy's family was so extraordinary as to call for a continuation of this somewhat prolix account, as affording an interesting chapter, not on Highland manners alone, but on every stage of society in which the people of a primitive and half-civilised tribe are brought into close contact with a nation in which civilisation and polity has attained a complete superiority.

Rob had five sons — Coll, Ronald, James, Duncan, and Robert. Nothing occurs worth notice concerning three of them; but James, who was a very handsome man, seems to have had a good deal of his father's spirit, and the mantle of Dugald Ciar Mohr had apparently descended on the shoulders of Robin Oig, that is, Young Robin. Shortly after Rob Roy's death the ill-will which the MacGregors entertained against the MacLarens again broke out, at the instigation, it was said, of Rob's widow, who seems thus far to have deserved the character given to her by her husband, as an Ate stirring up to blood and strife. Robin Oig, under her instigation, swore that as soon as he could get back a certain gun which had belonged to his father, and had been lately at Doune to be repaired, he would shoot MacLaren for having presumed to settle on his mother's land.¹ He was as good as his word, and shot MacLaren when between the stils of his plough, wounding him mortally.

¹ This fatal piece was taken from Robin Oig when he was seized many years afterwards. It remained in possession of the magistrate before whom he was brought for examination, and now makes part of a small

The aid of a Highland leech was procured, who probed the wound with a probe made out of a castock, *i.e.* the stalk of a colewort or cabbage. This learned gentleman declared he would not venture to prescribe, not knowing with what shot the patient had been wounded. MacLaren died, and about the same time his cattle were houghed and his live stock destroyed in a barbarous manner.

Robin Oig, after this feat, which one of his biographers represents as the unhappy discharge of a gun, retired to his mother's house to boast that he had drawn the first blood in the quarrel aforesaid. On the approach of troops and a body of the Stewarts, who were bound to take up the cause of their tenant, Robin Oig absconded, and escaped all search.

The doctor already mentioned, by name Callum MacInleister, with James and Ronald, brothers to the actual perpetrator of the murder, were brought to trial. But as they contrived to represent the action as a rash deed committed by the 'daft callant Rob,' to which they were not accessory, the jury found their accession to the crime was 'not proven.' The alleged acts of spoil and violence on the MacLarens' cattle were also found to be unsupported by evidence. As it was proved, however, that the two brothers, Ronald and James, were held and reputed thieves, they were appointed to find caution to the extent of £200 for their good behaviour for seven years.¹

collection of arms belonging to the Author. It is a Spanish-barrelled gun, marked with the letters R. M. C. for Robert MacGregor Campbell.

¹ The Author is uncertain whether it is worth while to mention that he had a personal opportunity of observing even in his own time that the king's writ did not pass quite current in the Braes of Balquidder. There were very considerable debts due by Stewart of Appin (chiefly to the Author's family), which were likely to be lost to the creditors if they could not be made available out of this same farm of Invernenty, the scene of the murder done upon MacLaren.

His family, consisting of several strapping deer-stalkers, still possessed the farm, by virtue of a long lease, for a trifling rent. There was no chance of any one buying it with such an encumbrance, and a transaction was entered into by the MacLarens, who, being desirous to emigrate to America, agreed to sell their lease to the creditors for £500, and to remove at the next term of Whitsunday. But whether they repented their bargain or desired to make a better, or whether from a mere point of honour, the MacLarens declared they would not permit a summons for removal to be executed against them, which was necessary for the legal completion of the bargain. And such was the general impression that they were men capable of resisting the legal execution of warning by very effectual means, no king's messenger would execute the summons without the support of a military force. An escort of a sergeant and six men was obtained from a Highland regiment lying in Stirling; and the Author, then a writer's apprentice, equivalent to the honourable situation of an attorney's clerk, was invested with the superintendence of the expedition, with directions to see that the messenger discharged his duty fully, and that the gallant sergeant did not exceed his part by committing violence or plunder. And thus it happened, oddly enough, that the Author first entered the romantic scenery of Loch Katrine, of which he may perhaps say he has somewhat extended the reputation, riding in all the dignity of danger, with a front and rear guard, and loaded arms. The sergeant was absolutely a Highland Sergeant Kite, full of stories of Rob Roy and of himself, and a very good companion. We experienced no interruption whatever, and when we came to Invernenty found the house deserted. We took up our quarters for the night, and used some of the victuals which we found there. On the morning we returned as unmolested as we came.

The MacLarens, who probably never thought of any serious opposition, received their money and went to America, where, having had some slight share in removing them from their *paupera regna*, I sincerely hope they prospered.

The rent of Invernenty instantly rose from £10 to £70 or £80; and

The spirit of clanship was at that time so strong—to which must be added the wish to secure the adherence of stout, able-bodied, and, as the Scotch phrase then went, 'pretty men'—that the representative of the noble family of Perth condescended to act openly as patron of the MacGregors, and appeared as such upon their trial. So at least the Author was informed by the late Robert MacIntosh, Esq., advocate. The circumstance may, however, have occurred later than 1736, the year in which this first trial took place.

Robin Oig served for a time in the 42d regiment, and was present at the battle of Fontenoy, where he was made prisoner and wounded. He was exchanged, returned to Scotland, and obtained his discharge. He afterwards appeared openly in the MacGregors' country; and, notwithstanding his outlawry, married a daughter of Graham of Drunkie, a gentleman of some property. His wife died a few years afterwards.

The insurrection of 1745 soon afterwards called the MacGregors to arms. Robert MacGregor of Glencarnock, generally regarded as the chief of the whole name, and grandfather of Sir John, whom the clan received in that character, raised a MacGregor regiment, with which he joined the standard of the Chevalier. The rise of Ciar Mohr, however, affecting independence, and commanded by Glengyle and his cousin James Roy MacGregor, did not join this kindred corps, but united themselves to the levies of the titular Duke of Perth, until William MacGregor Drummond of Balhaldie, whom they regarded as head of their branch of Clan Alpine, should come over from France. To cement the union after the Highland fashion, James laid down the name of Campbell and assumed that of Drummond, in compliment to Lord Perth. He was also called James Roy, after his father, and James Mohr, or Big James, from his height. His corps, the relics of his father Rob's band, behaved with great activity; with only twelve men he succeeded in surprising and burning, for the second time, the fort at Inversnaid, constructed for the express purpose of bridling the country of the MacGregors.

What rank or command James MacGregor had is uncertain. He calls himself Major, and Chevalier Johnstone calls him Captain. He must have held rank under Ghlune Dhu, his kinsman, but his active and audacious character placed him above the rest of his brethren. Many of his followers were unarmed; he supplied the want of guns and swords with scythe-blades set straight upon their handles.

At the battle of Prestonpans James Roy distinguished himself. 'His company,' says Chevalier Johnstone, 'did great execution with their scythes.' They cut the legs of the horses in two; the riders through the middle of their bodies. MacGregor was brave and intrepid, but, at the same time, somewhat whimsical and singular. When advancing to the charge with his company, he received five wounds, two of them from balls that pierced his body through and through. Stretched on the ground, with his head resting on his hand, he called out loudly to the Highlanders of his company, 'My lads, I am not dead. By G—, I shall see if any of you does not do his duty.' The victory, as is well known, was instantly obtained.

In some curious letters of James Roy¹ it appears that his thigh-bone was broken on this occasion, and that he, nevertheless, rejoined the army with six companies, and was present at the battle of Culloden. After that

when sold the farm was purchased (I think by the late Laird of MacNab) at a price higher in proportion than what even the modern rent authorised the parties interested to hope for.

¹ Published in *Blackwood's Magazine*, vol. II. page 290.

defeat the Clan MacGregor kept together in a body, and did not disperse till they had returned into their own country. They brought James Roy with them in a litter; and, without being particularly molested, he was permitted to reside in the MacGregor's country along with his brothers.

James MacGregor Drummond was attainted for high treason with persons of more importance. But it appears he had entered into some communication with government, as, in the letters quoted, he mentions having obtained a pass from the Lord Justice-Clerk in 1747, which was a sufficient protection to him from the military. The circumstance is obscurely stated in one of the letters already quoted, but may perhaps, joined to subsequent incidents, authorize the suspicion that James, like his father, could look at both sides of the cards. As the confusion of the country subsided, the MacGregors, like foxes which had baffled the hounds, drew back to their old haunts and lived unmolested. But an atrocious outrage in which the sons of Rob Roy were concerned brought at length on the family the full vengeance of the law.

James Roy was a married man, and had fourteen children. But his brother, Robin Oig, was now a widower; and it was resolved, if possible, that he should make his fortune by carrying off and marrying, by force if necessary, some woman of fortune from the Lowlands.

The imagination of the half-civilised Highlanders was less shocked at the idea of this particular species of violence than might be expected from their general kindness to the weaker sex when they make part of their own families. But all their views were tinged with the idea that they lived in a state of war; and in such a state, from the time of the siege of Troy to 'the moment when Trevisa fell,'¹ the female captives are, to uncivilised victors, the most valuable part of the booty.

The wealthy are slaughter'd, the lovely are spared.

We need not refer to the rape of the Sabines, or to a similar instance in the Book of Judges, for evidence that such deeds of violence have been committed upon a large scale. Indeed, this sort of enterprise was so common along the Highland line as to give rise to a variety of songs and ballads.² The annals of Ireland, as well as those of Scotland, prove the crime to have been common in the more lawless parts of both countries; and any woman who happened to please a man of spirit who had a good horse, and possessed a few chosen friends and a retreat in the mountains, was not permitted the alternative of saying him nay. What is more, it would seem that the women themselves, most interested in the immunities of their sex, were, among the lower classes, accustomed to regard such marriages as that which is presently to be detailed as 'pretty Fanny's way,' or rather, the way of Donald with pretty Fanny. It is not a great many years since a respectable woman, above the lower rank of life, expressed herself very warmly to the Author on his taking the freedom to censure the behaviour of the MacGregors on the occasion in question. She said 'that there was no use in giving a bride too much choice upon such occasions; that the marriages were the happiest lang syne which had been done off hand.' Finally, she averred that her 'own mother had never seen her father till the night he brought her up from the Lennox, with ten head of black cattle, and there had not been a happier couple in the country.'

¹ *Chil. e Harold's Pilgrimage, Canto II.*

² See Appendix No. V.

James Drummond and his brethren having similar opinions with the Author's old acquaintance, and debating how they might raise the fallen fortunes of their clan, formed a resolution to settle their brother's fortune by striking up an advantageous marriage betwixt Robin Oig and one Jean Key or Wright, a young woman scarce twenty years old, and who had been left about two months a widow by the death of her husband. Her property was estimated at only from 16,000 to 18,000 merks, but it seems to have been sufficient temptation to these men to join in the commission of a great crime.

This poor young victim lived with her mother in her own house at Edinbelly, in the parish of Balfroun and shire of Stirling. At this place, in the night of 3d December 1750, the sons of Rob Roy, and particularly James Mohr and Robin Oig, rushed into the house where the object of their attack was resident, presented guns, swords, and pistols to the males of the family, and terrified the women by threatening to break open the doors if Jean Key was not surrendered, as, said James Roy, 'his brother was a young fellow determined to make his fortune.' Having at length dragged the object of their lawless purpose from her place of concealment, they tore her from her mother's arms, mounted her on a horse before one of the gang, and carried her off in spite of her screams and cries, which were long heard after the terrified spectators of the outrage could no longer see the party retreat through the darkness. In her attempts to escape the poor young woman threw herself from the horse on which they had placed her, and in so doing wrenched her side. They then laid her double over the pommel of the saddle, and transported her through the moasses and moors till the pain of the injury she had suffered in her side, augmented by the uneasiness of her posture, made her consent to sit upright. In the execution of this crime they stopped at more houses than one, but none of the inhabitants dared interrupt their proceedings. Amongst others who saw them was that classical and accomplished scholar, the late Professor William Richardson of Glasgow, who used to describe as a terrible dream their violent and noisy entrance into the house where he was then residing. The Highlanders filled the little kitchen, brandishing their arms, demanding what they pleased, and receiving whatever they demanded. James Mohr, he said, was a tall, stern, and soldier-like man. Robin Oig looked more gentle; dark, but yet ruddy in complexion—a good-looking young savage. Their victim was so dishevelled in her dress, and forlorn in her appearance and demeanour, that he could hardly tell whether she was alive or dead.

The gang carried the unfortunate woman to Rowerdennan, where they had a priest unscrupulous enough to read the marriage service, while James Mohr forcibly held the bride up before him; and the priest declared the couple man and wife, even while she protested against the infamy of his conduct. Under the same threats of violence which had been all along used to enforce their scheme, the poor victim was compelled to reside with the pretended husband who was thus forced upon her. They even dared to carry her to the public church of Balquidder, where the officiating clergyman (the same who had been Rob Roy's pensioner) only asked them if they were married persons. Robert MacGregor answered in the affirmative; the terrified female was silent.

The country was now too effectually subjected to the law for this vile outrage to be followed by the advantages proposed by the actors. Military parties were sent out in every direction to seize the MacGregors,

who were for two or three weeks compelled to shift from one place to another in the mountains, bearing the unfortunate Jean Key along with them. In the meanwhile the Supreme Civil Court issued a warrant sequestrating the property of Jean Key or Wright, which removed out of the reach of the actors in the violence the prize which they expected. They had, however, adopted a belief of the poor woman's spirit being so far broken that she would prefer submitting to her condition, and adhering to Robin Oig as her husband, rather than incur the disgrace of appearing in such a cause in an open court. It was, indeed, a delicate experiment, but their kinsman Glengyle, chief of their immediate family, was of a temper averse to lawless proceedings;¹ and the captive's friends having had recourse to his advice, they feared that he would withdraw his protection if they refused to place the prisoner at liberty.

The brethren resolved, therefore, to liberate the unhappy woman, but previously had recourse to every measure which should oblige her, either from fear or otherwise, to own her marriage with Robin Oig. The cailliehs (old Highland hags) administered drugs, which were designed to have the effect of philtres, but were probably deleterious. James Mohr at one time threatened that, if she did not acquiesce in the match, she would find that there were enough of men in the Highlands to bring the heads of two of her uncles who were pursuing the civil lawsuit. At another time he fell down on his knees and confessed he had been accessory to wronging her, but begged she would not ruin his innocent wife and large family. She was made to swear she would not prosecute the brethren for the offence they had committed; and she was obliged by threats to subscribe papers which were tendered to her, intimating that she was carried off in consequence of her own previous request.

James Mohr Drummond accordingly brought his pretended sister-in-law to Edinburgh, where for some little time she was hurried about from one house to another, watched by those with whom she was lodged, and never permitted to go out alone, or even to approach the window. The Court of Session, considering the peculiarity of the case, and regarding Jean Key as being still under some forcible restraint, took her person under their own special charge, and appointed her to reside in the family of Mr. Wightman of Mauldsly, a gentleman of respectability, who was married to one of her near relatives. Two sentinels kept guard on the house day and night, a precaution not deemed superfluous when the Mac-Gregors were in question. She was allowed to go out whenever she chose, and to see whomsoever she had a mind, as well as the men of law employed in the civil suit on either side. When she first came to Mr. Wightman's house she seemed broken down with affright and suffering, so changed in features that her mother hardly knew her, and so shaken in mind that she scarce could recognise her parent. It was long before she could be assured that she was in perfect safety. But when she at length received confidence in her situation, she made a judicial declaration or affidavit, telling the full history of her wrongs, imputing to fear her former silence on the subject, and expressing her resolution not to prosecute those who had injured her, in respect of the oath which she had been compelled to

¹ Such, at least, was his general character: for when James Mohr, while perpetrating the violence at Edinbelly, called out, in order to overawe opposition, that Glengyle was lying in the moor with a hundred men to patronise his enterprise, Jean Key told him he lied, since she was confident Glengyle would never countenance so scoundrelly a business.

take. From the possible breach of such an oath, though a compulsory one, she was relieved by the forms of Scottish jurisprudence, in that respect more equitable than those of England, prosecutions for crimes being always conducted at the expense and charge of the king, without inconvenience or cost to the private party who has sustained the wrong. But the unhappy sufferer did not live to be either accuser or witness against those who had so deeply injured her.

James Mohr Drummond had left Edinburgh as soon as his half-prey had been taken from his clutches. Mrs. Key or Wright was released from her species of confinement there and removed to Glasgow, under the escort of Mr. Wightman. As they passed the Hill of Slough, her escort chanced to say, 'This is a very wild spot; what if the MacGregors should come upon us?' 'God forbid!' was her immediate answer, 'the very sight of them would kill me.' She continued to reside at Glasgow, without venturing to return to her own house at Edinbelly. Her pretended husband made some attempts to obtain an interview with her, which she steadily rejected. She died on the 4th October 1751. The information for the crown hints that her decease might be the consequence of the usage she received. But there is a general report that she died of the small-pox.

In the meantime James Mohr or Drummond fell into the hands of justice. He was considered as the instigator of the whole affair. Nay, the deceased had informed her friends that, on the night of her being carried off, Robin Oig, moved by her cries and tears, had partly consented to let her return, when James came up with a pistol in his hand, and, asking whether he was such a coward as to relinquish an enterprise in which he had risked everything to procure him a fortune, in a manner compelled his brother to persevere. James's trial took place on 13th July 1752, and was conducted with the utmost fairness and impartiality. Several witnesses, all of the MacGregor family, swore that the marriage was performed with every appearance of acquiescence on the woman's part; and three or four witnesses, one of them sheriff-substitute of the county, swore she might have made her escape if she wished, and the magistrate stated that he offered her assistance if she felt desirous to do so. But when asked why he, in his official capacity, did not arrest the MacGregors, he could only answer that he had not force sufficient to make the attempt.

The judicial declarations of Jean Key or Wright stated the violent manner in which she had been carried off, and they were confirmed by many of her friends, from her private communications with them, which the event of her death rendered good evidence. Indeed, the fact of her abduction (to use a Scottish law term) was completely proved by impartial witnesses. The unhappy woman admitted that she had pretended acquiescence in her fate on several occasions, because she dared not trust such as offered to assist her to escape, not even the sheriff-substitute.

The jury brought in a special verdict, finding that Jean Key or Wright had been forcibly carried off from her house, as charged in the indictment, and that the accused had failed to show that she was herself privy and consenting to this act of outrage. But they found the forcible marriage and subsequent violence was not proved; and also found, in alleviation of the panel's guilt in the premises, that Jean Key did afterwards acquiesce in her condition. Eleven of the jury, using the names of other four who were absent, subscribed a letter to the Court, stating it

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was their purpose and desire, by such special verdict, to take the panel's case out of the class of capital crimes.

Learned informations (written arguments) on the import of the verdict, which must be allowed a very mild one in the circumstances, were laid before the High Court of Justiciary. This point is very learnedly debated in these pleadings by Mr. Grant, Solicitor for the Crown, and the celebrated Mr. Lockhart, on the part of the prisoner; but James Mohr did not wait the event of the Court's decision.

He had been committed to the Castle of Edinburgh on some reports that an escape would be attempted. Yet he contrived to achieve his liberty even from that fortress. His daughter had the address to enter the prison, disguised as a cobbler, bringing home work, as she pretended. In this cobbler's dress her father quickly arrayed himself. The wife and daughter of the prisoner were heard by the sentinels scolding the supposed cobbler for having done his work ill, and the man came out with his hat slouched over his eyes, and grumbling, as if at the manner in which they had treated him. In this way the prisoner passed all the guards without suspicion, and made his escape to France. He was afterwards outlawed by the Court of Justiciary, which proceeded to the trial of Duncan MacGregor or Drummond, his brother, 15th January 1753. The accused had unquestionably been with the party which carried off Jean Key; but no evidence being brought which applied to him individually and directly, the jury found him not guilty, and nothing more is known of his fate.

That of James MacGregor, who, from talent and activity, if not by seniority, may be considered as head of the family, has been long misrepresented, as it has been generally averred in Law Reports, as well as elsewhere, that his outlawry was reversed, and that he returned and died in Scotland. But the curious letters published in *Blackwood's Magazine* for December 1817 show this to be an error. The first of these documents is a petition to Charles Edward. It is dated 20th September 1753, and pleads his service to the cause of the Stuarts, ascribing his exile to the persecution of the Hanoverian Government, without any allusion to the affair of Jean Key or the Court of Justiciary. It is stated to be forwarded by MacGregor Drummond of Balhaldie, whom, as before mentioned, James Mohr acknowledged as his chief.

The effect which this petition produced does not appear. Some temporary relief was perhaps obtained. But soon after this daring adventurer was engaged in a very dark intrigue against an exile of his own country, and placed pretty nearly in his own circumstances. A remarkable Highland story must be here briefly alluded to. Mr. Campbell of Glenure, who had been named factor for government on the forfeited estates of Stewart of Ardsheil, was shot dead by an assassin as he passed through the wood of Lettermore, after crossing the ferry of Ballachulish. A gentleman named James Stewart, a natural brother of Ardsheil, the forfeited person, was tried as being accessory to the murder, and condemned and executed upon very doubtful evidence, the heaviest part of which only amounted to the accused person having assisted a nephew of his own, called Allan Breck Stewart, with money to escape after the deed was done. Not satisfied with this vengeance, which was obtained in a manner little to the honour of the dispensation of justice at the time, the friends of the deceased Glenure were eagerly desirous to obtain possession of the person of Allan Breck Stewart, supposed to be the actual homicide. James Mohr Drummond was secretly applied to to trepan Stewart to

the sea-coast, and bring him over to Britain to almost certain death. Drummond MacGregor had kindred connexions with the slain Glenure; and, besides, the MacGregors and Campbells had been friends of late, while the former clan and the Stewarts had, as we have seen, been recently at feud; lastly, Robert Oig was now in custody at Edinburgh, and James was desirous to do some service by which his brother might be saved. The joint force of these motives may, in James's estimation of right and wrong, have been some vindication for engaging in such an enterprise, although, as must be necessarily supposed, it could only be executed by treachery of a gross description. MacGregor stipulated for a license to return to England, promising to bring Allan Breck thither along with him. But the intended victim was put upon his guard by two countrymen, who suspected James's intentions towards him. He escaped from his kidnapper, after, as MacGregor alleged, robbing his portmanteau of some clothes and four snuff-boxes. Such a charge, it may be observed, could scarce have been made unless the parties had been living on a footing of intimacy, and had access to each other's baggage.

Although James Drummond had thus missed his blow in the matter of Allan Breck Stewart, he used his license to make a journey to London, and had an interview, as he avers, with Lord Holderness. His Lordship and the Under-Secretary put many puzzling questions to him; and, as he says, offered him a situation which would bring him bread in the government's service. This office was advantageous as to emolument, but in the opinion of James Drummond his acceptance of it would have been a disgrace to his birth, and have rendered him a scourge to his country. If such a tempting offer and sturdy rejection had any foundation in fact, it probably relates to some plan of espionage on the Jacobites, which the government might hope to carry on by means of a man who, in the matter of Allan Breck Stewart, had shown no great nicety of feeling. Drummond MacGregor was so far accommodating as to intimate his willingness to act in any station in which other gentlemen of honour served, but not otherwise; an answer which, compared with some passages of his past life, may remind the reader of Ancient Pistol standing upon his reputation.

Having thus proved intractable, as he tells the story, to the proposals of Lord Holderness, James Drummond was ordered instantly to quit England.

On his return to France his condition seems to have been utterly disastrous. He was seized with fever and gravel, ill consequently in body, and weakened and dispirited in mind. Allan Breck Stewart threatened to put him to death in revenge of the designs he had harboured against him.¹ The Stewart clan were in the highest degree unfriendly to him;

¹ Allan Breck Stewart was a man likely in such a matter to keep his word. James Drummond MacGregor and he, like Katherine and Petruchio, were well matched 'for a couple of quiet ones.' Allan Breck lived till the beginning of the French Revolution. About 1789 a friend of mine, then residing at Paris, was invited to see some procession which was supposed likely to interest him, from the windows of an apartment occupied by a Scottish Benedictine priest. He found, sitting by the fire, a tall, thin, raw-boned, grim-looking old man, with the *petit croix* of St. Louis. His visage was strongly marked by the irregular projections of the cheek-bones and chin. His eyes were grey. His grizzled hair exhibited marks of having been red, and his complexion was weather-beaten, and remarkably freckled. Some civilities in French passed between the old man and my friend, in the course of which they talked of the streets and squares of Paris, till at length the old soldier, for such he seemed and such he

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and his late expedition to London had been attended with many suspicious circumstances, amongst which it was not the slightest that he had kept his purpose secret from his chief Balhaldie. His intercourse with Lord Holderness was suspicious. The Jacobites were probably, like Don Bernard de Castil Blazo in *Gil Blas*, little disposed to like those who kept company with alguazils. MacDonnell of Lochgarry, a man of unquestioned honour, lodged an information against James Drummond before the High Bailie of Dunkirk, accusing him of being a spy, so that he found himself obliged to leave that town and come to Paris, with only the sum of thirteen livres for his immediate subsistence, and with absolute beggary staring him in the face.

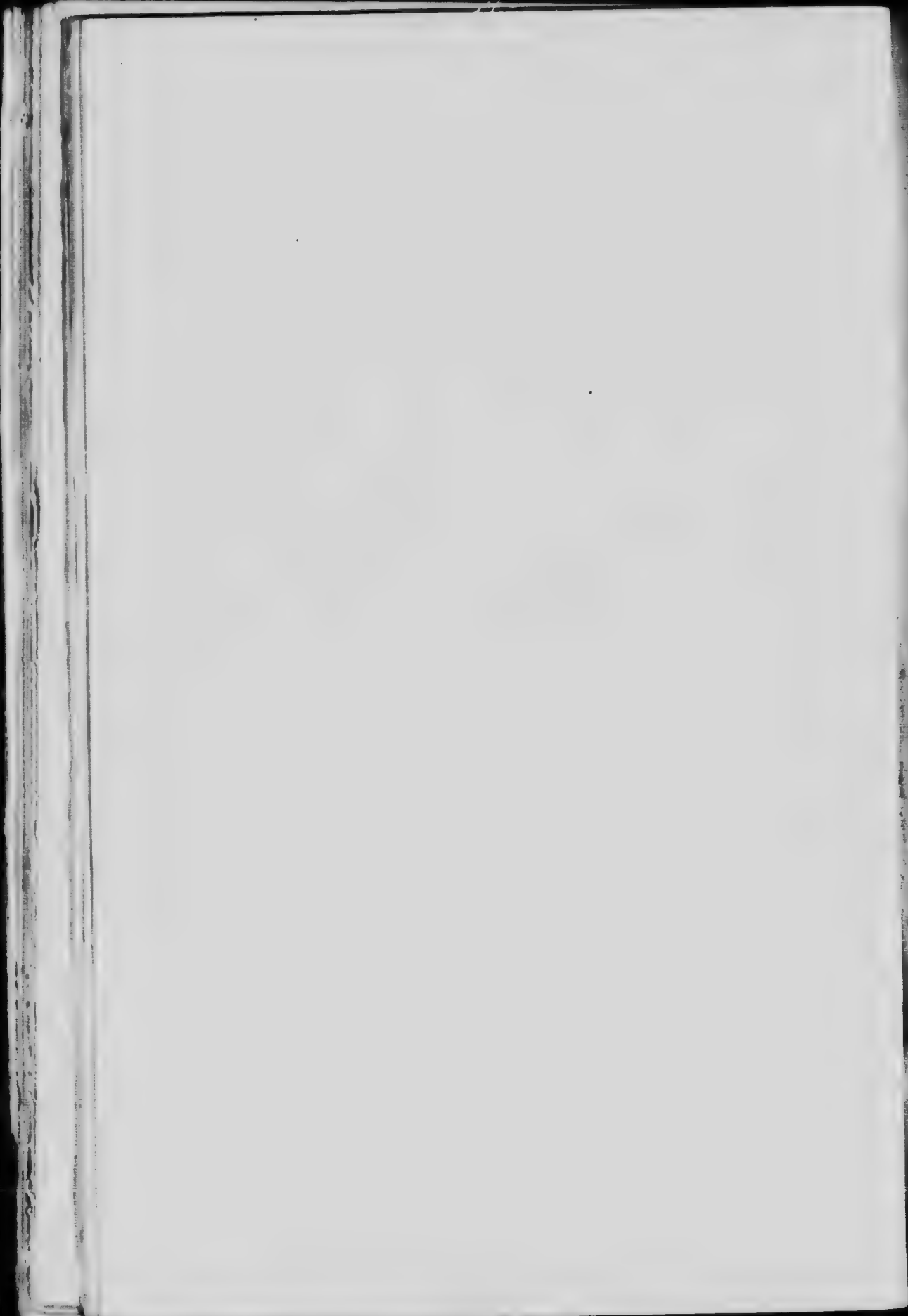
We do not offer the convicted common thief, the accomplice in MacLaren's assassination, or the manager of the outrage against Jean Key, as an object of sympathy; but it is melancholy to look on the dying struggles even of a wolf or tiger, creatures of a species directly hostile to our own; and in like manner the utter distress of this man, whose faults may have sprung from a wild system of education, working on a haughty temper, will not be perused without some pity. In his last letter to Balhaldie, dated Paris, 25th September 1754, he describes his state of destitution as absolute, and expresses himself willing to exercise his talents in breaking or breeding horses, or as a hunter or fowler, if he could only procure employment in such an inferior capacity till something better should occur. An Englishman may smile, but a Scotsman will sigh at the postscript, in which the poor starving exile asks the loan of his patron's bagpipes, that he might play over some of the melancholy tunes of his own land. But the effect of music arises in a great degree from association, and sounds which lander his lofty mountain, wild lake, and the deeds of his fathers of the glen. To prove MacGregor's claim to our reader's compassion, we here insert the last part of the letter alluded to:—

'By all appearance I am born to suffer Crosses, and it seems they're not at an end; for such is my wretched Case at present, that I do not know earthly where to go or what to do, as I have no subsistence to keep soul and body together. All that I have carried here is about 13 livres, and has taken a Room at my old quarters in Hotel St. Pierre, Rue de Cordier. I send you the bearer, begging of you to let me know if you are to be in Town soon, that I may have (the) pleasure of seeing you, for I have none to make application to but you alone; and all I want is, if it was possible you could contrive where I could be employed so as to keep me in Life without going to entire Beggary. This probably is a difficult point, yet, unless it's attended with some difficulty, you might think nothing of it, as your long head can bring about matters of much more Difficulty and Consequence than this. If you'd disclose this matter to your friend Mr. Buttler, it's possible he might have some Employ wherein I could be of use, as I pretend to know as much of Breeding and riding of Horses as any in France, besides that I am a good Hunter, either on horseback or by fowling. You may judge my Reduction, as I propose the meanest things to serve a turn till better cast up. I am sorry that I am obliged to give you so much trouble, but I hope you are very well assured that I am

was, said with a sigh, in a sharp Highland accent, 'Dell ane o' them a' is worth the Hie Street of Edinburgh!' On inquiry this admirer of Auld Reekie, which he was never to see again, proved to be Allan Breck Stewart. He lived decently on his little pension, and had in no subsequent period of his life shown anything of the savage mood in which he is generally believed to have assassinated the enemy and oppressor, as he supposed him, of his family and clan.



GRAVE OF ROB ROY, BALQUHIDDER.
From a recent photograph.



grateful for what you have done for me, and I leave you to judge of my present wretched case. I am, and shall for ever continue,

'Dear Chief, your own to command,
'JAS. MACGREGOR.

'P.S. — If you'd send your pipes by the Bearer, and all the other little trinkins belonging to it, I would put them in order, and play some Melancholy tunes, which I may now with safety, and in real truth. Forgive my not going directly to your house, for if I could shun seeing of yourself, I could not choose to be seen by my friends in my wretchedness, nor by any of my acquaintance.'

While MacGregor wrote in this disconsolate manner, Death, the sad but sure remedy for mortal evils, and decider of all doubts and uncertainties, was hovering near him. A memorandum on the back of the letter says the writer died about a week after, in October 1754.

It now remains to mention the fate of Robin Oig, for the other sons of Rob Roy seem to have been no way distinguished. Robin was apprehended by a party of military from the fort of Inversnaid, at the foot of Gartmore, and was conveyed to Edinburgh, 26th May 1753. After a delay, which may have been protracted by the negotiations of James for delivering up Allan Breck Stewart, upon promise of his brother's life, Robin Oig, on the 24th December 1753, was brought to the bar of the High Court of Justiciary, and indicted by the name of Robert MacGregor, *alias* Campbell, *alias* Drummond, *alias* Robert Oig; and the evidence led against him resembled exactly that which was brought by the Crown on the former trial. Robert's case was in some degree more favourable than his brother's; for, though the principal in the forcible marriage, he had yet to plead that he had shown symptoms of relenting while they were carrying Jean Key off, which were silenced by the remonstrances and threats of his harder-natured brother James. Four years had also elapsed since the poor woman died, which is always a strong circumstance in favour of the accused; for there is a sort of perspective in guilt, and crimes of an old date seem less odious than those of recent occurrence. But, notwithstanding these considerations, the jury, in Robert's case, did not express any solicitude to save his life, as they had done that of James. They found him guilty of being art and part in the forcible abduction of Jean Key from her own dwelling.¹

Robin Oig was condemned to death, and executed on 6th February 1754. At the place of execution he behaved with great decency; and, professing himself a Catholic, imputed all his misfortunes to his swerving from the true church two or three years before. He confessed the violent methods he had used to gain Mrs. Key or Wright, and hoped his fate would stop further proceedings against his brother James.²

The newspapers observe that his body, after hanging the usual time, was delivered to his friends to be carried to the Highlands. To this the recollection of a venerable friend, recently taken from us in the fulness of years, then a school-boy at Linlithgow, enables the Author to add, that a much larger body of MacGregors than had eared to advance to Edinburgh received the corpse at that place with the coronach and other wild emblems

¹ *The Trials of . . . Sons of Rob Roy, with Anecdotes of Himself and his Family*, were published at Edinburgh, 1818, in 12mo.

² James died near three months before, but his family might easily remain a long time without the news of that event. [But compare the dates in the text.]

of Highland mourning, and so escorted it to Balquidder. Thus we may conclude this long account of Rob Roy and his family with the classic phrase —

ITE. CONCLAMATUM EST.

I have only to add that I have selected the above from many anecdotes of Rob Roy which were, and may still be, current among the mountains where he flourished; but I am far from warranting their exact authenticity. Clannish partialities were very apt to guide the tongue and pen as well as the pistol and claymore, and the features of an anecdote are wonderfully softened or exaggerated as the story is told by a MacGregor or a Campbell.

ROB ROY

CHAPTER I

How have I sinn'd, that this affliction
Should light so heavy on me? I have no more sons,
And this no more mine own. My grand curse
Hang o'er his head that thus transform'd thee! Travel?
I'll send my horse to travel next.

MONSIEUR THOMAS.

YOU have requested me, my dear friend, to bestow some of that leisure with which Providence has blessed the decline of my life in registering the hazards and difficulties which attended its commencement. The recollection of those adventures, as you are pleased to term them, has indeed left upon my mind a chequered and varied feeling of pleasure and of pain, mingled, I trust, with no slight gratitude and veneration to the Disposer of human events, who guided my early course through much risk and labour, that the ease with which he has blessed my prolonged life might seem softer from remembrance and contrast. Neither is it possible for me to doubt, what you have often affirmed, that the incidents which befell me among a people singularly primitive in their government and manners have something interesting and attractive for those who love to hear an old man's stories of a past age.

Still, however, you must remember that the tale told by one friend, and listened to by another, loses half its charms when committed to paper; and that the narratives to which you have attended with interest, as heard from the voice of him to whom they occurred, will appear less deserving of attention when perused in the seclusion of your study. But your greener age and robust constitution promise longer life than will, in all human probability, be the lot of your friend. Throw,

then, these sheets into some secret drawer of your *escritoir* till we are separated from each other's society by an event which may happen at any moment, and which must happen within the course of a few — a very few years. When we are parted in this world — to meet, I hope, in a better — you will, I am well aware, cherish more than it deserves the memory of your departed friend, and will find in those details which I am now to commit to paper matter for melancholy but not unpleasing reflection. Others bequeath to the confidants of their bosom portraits of their external features; I put into your hands a faithful transcript of my thoughts and feelings, of my virtues and of my failings, with the assured hope that the follies and headstrong impetuosity of my youth will meet the same kind construction and forgiveness which have so often attended the faults of my matured age.

One advantage, among the many, of addressing my *Memoirs* (if I may give these sheets a name so imposing) to a dear and intimate friend is, that I may spare some of the details, in this case unnecessary, with which I must needs have detained a stranger from what I have to say of greater interest. Why should I bestow all my tediousness upon you because I have you in my power, and have ink, paper, and time before me? At the same time I dare not promise that I may not abuse the opportunity so temptingly offered me to treat of myself and my own concerns, even though I speak of circumstances as well known to you as to myself. The seductive love of narrative, when we ourselves are the heroes of the events which we tell, often disregards the attention due to the time and patience of the audience, and the best and wisest have yielded to its fascination. I need only remind you of the singular instance evinced by the form of that rare and original edition of Sully's *Memoirs*, which you (with the fond vanity of a book-collector) insist upon preferring to that which is reduced to the useful and ordinary form of *Memoirs*, but which I think curious solely as illustrating how far so great a man as the author was accessible to the foible of self-importance. If I recollect rightly, that venerable peer and great statesman had appointed no fewer than four gentlemen of his household to draw up the events of his life, under the title of *Memorials of the Sage and Royal Affairs of State, Domestic, Political, and Military, transacted by Henry IV.*, and so forth. These grave recorders, having made their compilation, reduced the *Memoirs* containing all the remarkable events of their master's life into a narrative, addressed to him-

self in *propria persona*. And thus, instead of telling his own story in the third person, like Julius Cæsar, or in the first person, like most who, in the hall or the study, undertake to be the heroes of their own tale, Sully enjoyed the refined though whimsical pleasure of having the events of his life told over to him by his secretaries, being himself the auditor, as he was also the hero, and probably the author, of the whole book. It must have been a great sight to have seen the ex-minister, as bolt upright as a starched ruff and laced cassock could make him, seated in state beneath his canopy, and listening to the recitation of his compilers, while, standing bare in his presence, they informed him gravely, 'Thus said the duke — so did the duke infer — such were your grace's sentiments upon this important point — such were your secret counsels to the king on that other emergency,' — circumstances all of which must have been much better known to their hearer than to themselves, and most of which could only be derived from his own special communication.

My situation is not quite so ludicrous as that of the great Sully, and yet there would be something whimsical in Frank Osbaldistone giving Will Tresham a formal account of his birth, education, and connexions in the world. I will, therefore, wrestle with the tempting spirit of P. P., clerk of our parish, as I best may, and endeavour to tell you nothing that is familiar to you already. Some things, however, I must recall to your memory, because, though formerly well known to you, they may have been forgotten through lapse of time, and they afford the groundwork of my destiny.

You must remember my father well; for, as your own was a member of the mercantile house, you knew him from infancy. Yet you hardly saw him in his best days, before age and infirmity had quenched his ardent spirit of enterprise and speculation. He would have been a poorer man indeed, but perhaps as happy, had he devoted to the extension of science those active energies and acute powers of observation for which commercial pursuits found occupation. Yet in the fluctuations of mercantile speculation there is something captivating to the adventurer, even independent of the hope of gain. He who embarks on that fickle sea requires to possess the skill of the pilot and the fortitude of the navigator, and after all may be wrecked and lost, unless the gales of fortune breathe in his favour. This mixture of necessary attention and inevitable hazard — the frequent and awful uncertainty whether prudence

shall overcome fortune, or fortune baffle the schemes of prudence — affords full occupation for the powers as well as for the feelings of the mind, and trade has all the fascination of gambling without its moral guilt.

Early in the 18th century, when I — Heaven help me! — was a youth of some twenty years old, I was summoned suddenly from Bourdeaux to attend my father on business of importance. I shall never forget our first interview. You recollect the brief, abrupt, and somewhat stern mode in which he was wont to communicate his pleasure to those around him. Methinks I see him even now in my mind's eye — the firm and upright figure; the step, quick and determined; the eye, which shot so keen and so penetrating a glance; the features, on which care had already planted wrinkles; and hear his language, in which he never wasted word in vain, expressed in a voice which had sometimes an occasional harshness far from the intention of the speaker.

When I dismounted from my post-horse I hastened to my father's apartment. He was traversing it with an air of composed and steady deliberation which even my arrival, although an only son unseen for four years, was unable to discompose. I threw myself into his arms. He was a kind, though not a fond, father, and the tear twinkled in his dark eye, but it was only for a moment.

'Dubourg writes to me that he is satisfied with you, Frank.'

'I am happy, sir —'

'But I have less reason to be so,' he added, sitting down at his bureau.

'I am sorry, sir —'

'Sorry and happy, Frank, are words that on most occasions signify little or nothing. Here is your last letter.'

He took it out from a number of others tied up in a parcel of red tape, and curiously labelled and filed. There lay my poor epistle, written on the subject the nearest to my heart at the time, and couched in words which I had thought would work compassion, if not conviction — there, I say, it lay, squeezed up among the letters on miscellaneous business in which my father's daily affairs had engaged him. I cannot help smiling internally when I recollect the mixture of hurt vanity and wounded feeling with which I regarded my remonstrance, to the penning of which there had gone, I promise you, some trouble — as I beheld it extracted from amongst letters of advice, of credit, and all the commonplace lumber, as I then thought

them, of a merchant's correspondence. 'Surely,' thought I, 'a letter of such importance — I dared not say, even to myself, so well written — deserved a separate place, as well as more anxious consideration, than those on the ordinary business of the counting-house.'

But my father did not observe my dissatisfaction, and would not have minded it if he had. He proceeded, with the letter in his hand: 'This, Frank, is yours of the 21st ultimo, in which you advise me (reading from my letter) that in the most important business of forming a plan and adopting a profession for life you trust my paternal goodness will hold you entitled to at least a negative voice; that you have insuperable — ay, insuperable is the word — I wish, by the way, you would write a more distinct current hand, draw a score through the tops of your t's and open the loops of your l's — insuperable objections to the arrangements which I have proposed to you. There is much more to the same effect, occupying four good pages of paper, which a little attention to perspicuity and distinctness of expression might have comprised within as many lines. For, after all, Frank, it amounts but to this, that you will not do as I would have you.'

'That I cannot, sir, in the present instance, not that I will not.'

'Words avail very little with me, young man,' said my father, whose inflexibility always possessed the air of the most perfect calmness and self-possession. "'Can not'" may be a more civil phrase than "will not," but the expressions are synonymous where there is no moral impossibility. But I am not a friend to doing business hastily; we will talk this matter over after dinner. Owen!'

Owen appeared, not with the silver locks which you were used to venerate, for he was then little more than fifty; but he had the same, or an exactly similar, uniform suit of light brown clothes; the same pearl-grey silk stockings; the same stock, with its silver buckle; the same plaited cambric ruffles, drawn down over his knuckles in the parlour, but in the counting-house carefully folded back under the sleeves, that they might remain unstained by the ink which he daily consumed — in a word, the same grave, formal, yet benevolent cast of features which continued to his death to distinguish the head clerk of the great house of Osbaldistone and Tresham.

'Owen,' said my father, as the kind old man shook me affectionately by the hand, 'you must dine with us to-day,

and hear the news Frank has brought us from our friends in Bourdeaux.'

Owen made one of his stiff bows of respectful gratitude; for, in those days, when the distance between superiors and inferiors was enforced in a manner to which the present times are strangers, such an invitation was a favour of some little consequence.

I shall long remember that dinner-party. Deeply affected by feelings of anxiety, not unmingled with displeasure, I was unable to take that active share in the conversation which my father seemed to expect from me; and I too frequently gave unsatisfactory answers to the questions with which he assailed me. Owen, hovering betwixt his respect for his patron and his love for the youth he had dandled on his knee in childhood, like the timorous yet anxious ally of an invaded nation, endeavoured at every blunder I made to explain my no-meaning and to cover my retreat; manœuvres which added to my father's pettish displeasure, and brought a share of it upon my kind advocate, instead of protecting me. I had not, while residing in the house of Dubourg, absolutely conducted myself like

A clerk condemn'd his father's soul to cross,
Who penn'd a stanza when he should engross;

but, to say truth, I had frequented the counting-house no more than I had thought absolutely necessary to secure the good report of the Frenchman, long a correspondent of our firm, to whom my father had trusted for initiating me into the mysteries of commerce. In fact, my principal attention had been dedicated to literature and manly exercises. My father did not altogether discourage such acquirements, whether mental or personal. He had too much good sense not to perceive that they sate gracefully upon every man, and I was as sensible that they relieved and dignified the character to which he wished me to aspire. But his chief ambition was that I should succeed not merely to his fortune, but to the views and plans by which he imagined he could extend and perpetuate the wealthy inheritance which he designed for me.

Love of his profession was the motive which he chose should be most ostensible when he urged me to tread the same path; but he had others with which I only became acquainted at a later period. Impetuous in his schemes, as well as skilful and daring, each new adventure, when successful, became at once the incentive, and furnished the means, for farther speculation.

It seemed to be necessary to him, as to an ambitious conqueror, to push on from achievement to achievement, without stopping to secure, far less to enjoy, the acquisitions which he made. Accustomed to see his whole fortune trembling in the scales of chance, and dexterous at adopting expedients for casting the balance in his favour, his health and spirits and activity seemed ever to increase with the animating hazards on which he staked his wealth; and he resembled a sailor, accustomed to brave the billows and the foe, whose confidence risen on the eve of tempest or of battle. He was not, however, insensible to the changes which increasing age or supervening malady might make in his own constitution; and was anxious in good time to secure in me an assistant who might take the helm when his hand grew weary, and keep the vessel's way according to his counsel and instruction. Paternal affection, as well as the furtherance of his own plans, determined him to the same conclusion. Your father, though his fortune was vested in the house, was only a sleeping partner, as the commercial phrase goes; and Owen, whose probity and skill in the details of arithmetic rendered his services invaluable as a head clerk, was not possessed either of information or talents sufficient to conduct the mysteries of the principal management. If my father were suddenly summoned from life, what would become of the world of schemes which he had formed, unless his son were moulded into a commercial Hercules, fit to sustain the weight when relinquished by the falling Atlas? and what would become of that son himself if, a stranger to business of this description, he found himself at once involved in the labyrinth of mercantile concerns, without the clue of knowledge necessary for his extraction? For all these reasons, avowed and secret, my father was determined I should embrace his profession; and when he was determined the resolution of no man was more immovable. I, however, was also a party to be consulted; and, with something of his own pertinacity, I had formed a determination precisely contrary.

It may, I hope, be some palliative for the resistance which on this occasion I offered to my father's wishes, that I did not fully understand upon what they were founded, or how deeply his happiness was involved in them. Imagining myself certain of a large provision in future and ample maintenance in the meanwhile, I was not disposed to see that it might be necessary, in order to submit to labour and limits per. I only saw in

my father's proposal for my engaging in business a desire that I should add to those heaps of wealth which he had himself acquired; and, imagining myself the best judge of the path to my own happiness, I did not conceive that I should increase that happiness by augmenting a fortune which I believed was already sufficient, and more than sufficient, for every use, comfort, and elegant enjoyment.

Accordingly, I am compelled to repeat that my time at Bourdeaux had not been spent as my father had proposed to himself. What he considered as the chief end of my residence in that city I had postponed for every other, and would (had I dared) have neglected it altogether. Dubourg, a favoured and benefited correspondent of our mercantile house, was too much of a shrewd politician to make such reports to the head of the firm concerning his only child as would excite the displeasure of both; and he might also, as you will presently hear, have views of selfish advantage in suffering me to neglect the purposes for which I was placed under his charge. My conduct was regulated by the bounds of decency and good order, and thus far he had no evil report to make, supposing him so disposed; but perhaps the crafty Frenchman would have been equally complaisant had I been in the habit of indulging worse feelings than those of indolence and aversion to mercantile business. As it was, while I gave a decent portion of my time to the commercial studies he recommended, he was by no means envious of the hours which I dedicated to other and more classical attainments, nor did he ever find fault with me for dwelling upon Corneille and Boileau in preference to Postlethwayte (supposing his folio to have then existed, and Monsieur Dubourg able to have pronounced his name) or Savary, or any other writer on commercial economy. He had picked up somewhere a convenient expression, with which he rounded off every letter to his correspondent. 'I was all,' he said, 'that a father could wish.'

My father never quarrelled with a phrase, however frequently repeated, provided it seemed to him distinct and expressive; and Addison himself could not have found expressions so satisfactory to him as, 'Yours received, and duly honoured the bills inclosed, as per margin.'

Knowing, therefore, very well what he desired me to be, Mr. Osbaldistone made no doubt, from the frequent repetition of Dubourg's favourite phrase, that I was the very thing he wished to see me; when, in an evil hour, he received my letter,

containing my eloquent and detailed apology for declining a place in the firm and a desk and stool in the corner of the dark counting-house in Crane Alley, surmounting in height those of Owen and the other clerks, and only inferior to the tripod of my father himself. All was wrong from that moment. Dubourg's reports became as suspicious as if his bills had been noted for dishonour. I was summoned home in all haste, and received in the manner I have already communicated to you.

CHAPTER II

I begin shrewdly to suspect the young man of a terrible taint — poetry ; with which idle disease if he be infected, there's no hope of him in a state course. *Actum est* of him for a Commonwealth's man, if he go to't in rhyme once.

BEN JONSON'S *Bartholomew Fair*.

MY father had, generally speaking, his temper under complete self-command, and his anger rarely indicated itself by words, except in a sort of dry testy manner, to those who had displeased him. He never used threats or expressions of loud resentment. All was arranged with him on system, and it was his practice to do 'the needful' on every occasion without wasting words about it. It was, therefore, with a bitter smile that he listened to my imperfect answers concerning the state of commerce in France, and unmercifully permitted me to involve myself deeper and deeper in the mysteries of *agio*, tariffs, tare and tret ; nor can I charge my memory with his having looked positively angry, until he found me unable to explain the exact effect which the depreciation of the louis d'or had produced on the negotiation of bills of exchange. 'The most remarkable national occurrence in my time,' said my father, who nevertheless had seen the Revolution, 'and he knows no more of it than a post on the quay !'

'Mr. Francis,' suggested Owen, in his timid and conciliatory manner, 'cannot have forgotten that by an *arrêt* of the king of France, dated 1st May 1700, it was provided that the *porteur*, within ten days after due, must make demand —'

'Mr. Francis,' said my father, interrupting him, 'will, I daresay, recollect for the moment anything you are so kind as hint to him ! But, body o' me ! how Dubourg could permit him ! Hark ye, Owen, what sort of a youth is Clement Dubourg, his nephew there, in the office, the black-haired lad ?'

'One of the cleverest clerks, sir, in the house, a prodigious young man for his time,' answered Owen; for the gaiety and civility of the young Frenchman had won his heart.

'Ay, ay, I suppose *he* knows something of the nature of exchange. Dubourg was determined I should have one youngster at least about my hand who understood business; but I see his drift, and he shall find that I do so when he looks at the balance-sheet. Owen, let Clement's salary be paid up to next quarter-day, and let him ship himself back to Bourdeaux in his father's ship, which is clearing out yonder.'

'Dismiss Clement Dubourg, sir?' said Owen, with a faltering voice.

'Yes, sir, dismiss him instantly; it is enough to have a stupid Englishman in the counting-house to make blunders, without keeping a sharp Frenchman there to profit by them.'

I had lived long enough in the territories of the *Grand Monarque* to contract a hearty aversion to arbitrary exertion of authority, even if it had not been instilled into me with my earliest breeding, and I could not refrain from interposing to prevent an innocent and meritorious young man from paying the penalty of having acquired that proficiency which my father had desired for me.

'I beg pardon, sir,' when Mr. Osbaldistone had done speaking, 'but I think it but just that, if I have been negligent of my studies, I should pay the forfeit myself. I have no reason to charge Monsieur Dubourg with having neglected to give me opportunities of improvement, however little I may have profited by them; and with respect to Monsieur Clement Dubourg —'

'With respect to him, and to you, I shall take the measures which I see needful,' replied my father; 'but it is fair in you, Frank, to take your own blame on your own shoulders — very fair, that cannot be denied. I cannot acquit old Dubourg,' he said, looking to Owen, 'for having merely afforded Frank the means of useful knowledge, without either seeing that he took advantage of them or reporting to me if he did not. You see, Owen, he has natural notions of equity becoming a British merchant.'

'Mr. Francis,' said the head clerk, with his usual formal inclination of the head, and a slight elevation of his right hand, which he had acquired by a habit of sticking his pen behind his ear before he spoke — 'Mr. Francis seems to understand the fundamental principle of all moral accounting, the great ethic rule of three. Let A do to B as he would have B do to him; the product will give the rule of conduct required.'

My father smiled at this reduction of the golden rule to arithmetical form, but instantly proceeded : 'All this signifies nothing, Frank ; you have been throwing away your time like a boy, and in future you must learn to live like a man. I shall put you under Owen's care for a few months, to recover the lost ground.'

I was about to reply, but Owen looked at me with such a supplicatory and warning gesture that I was involuntarily silent.

'We will then,' continued my father, 'resume the subject of mine of the 1st ultimo, to which you sent me an answer which was unadvised and unsatisfactory. So now fill your glass and push the bottle to Owen.'

Want of courage — of audacity, if you will — was never my failing. I answered firmly, 'I was sorry that my letter was unsatisfactory, unadvised it was not ; for I had given the proposal his goodness had made me my instant and anxious attention, and it was with no small pain that I found myself obliged to decline it.'

My father bent his keen eye for a moment on me, and instantly withdrew it. As he made no answer, I thought myself obliged to proceed, though with some hesitation, and he only interrupted me by monosyllables.

'It is impossible, sir, for me to have higher respect for any character than I have for the commercial, even were it not yours.'

'Indeed !'

'It connects nation with nation, relieves the wants and contributes to the wealth of all ; and is to the general commonwealth of the civilised world what the daily intercourse of ordinary life is to private society, or rather, what air and food are to our bodies.'

'Well, sir ?'

'And yet, sir, I find myself compelled to persist in declining to adopt a character which I am so ill qualified to support.'

'I will take care that you acquire the qualifications necessary. You are no longer the guest and pupil of Dubourg.'

'But, my dear sir, it is no defect of teaching which I plead, but my own inability to profit by instruction.'

'Nonsense ; have you kept your journal in the terms I desired ?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Be pleased to bring it here.'

The volume thus required was a sort of commonplace book, kept by my father's recommendation, in which I had been directed to enter notes of the miscellaneous information which I had acquired in the course of my studies. Foreseeing that he would demand inspection of this record, I had been attentive to transcribe such particulars of information as he would most likely be pleased with, but too often the pen had discharged the task without much correspondence with the head. And it had also happened that, the book being the receptacle nearest to my hand, I had occasionally jotted down memoranda which had little regard to traffic. I now put it into my father's hand, devoutly hoping he might light on nothing that would increase his displeasure against me. Owen's face, which had looked something blank when the question was put, cleared up at my ready answer, and wore a smile of hope when I brought from my apartment, and placed before my father, a commercial-looking volume, rather broader than it was long, having brazen clasps and a binding of rough calf. This looked business-like, and was encouraging to my benevolent well-wisher. But he actually smiled with pleasure as he heard my father run over some part of the contents, muttering his critical remarks as he went on.

'*Brandies — barils and barricanss, also tonneaux: at Nantz 29; veltes to the barrique — at Cognac and Rochelle 27; at Bourdeaux 32. Very right, Frank. Duties on tonnage and custom-house, see Saxby's Tables. That's not well; you should have transcribed the passage; it fixes the thing in the memory. Reports outward and inward. Corn debentures. Over-sea Cockets. Linens — Isingham; Gentish. Stock-fish — Titling; Cropling; Lub-fish. You should have noted that they are all, nevertheless, to be entered as titlings. How many inches long is a titling?*'

Owen, seeing me at fault, hazarded a whisper, of which I fortunately caught the import.

'Eighteen inches, sir —'

'And a lub-fish is twenty-four — very right. It is important to remember this, on account of the Portuguese trade. But what have we here? *Bourdeaux founded in the year. Castle of the Trompette. Palace of Gallienus.* Well, well, that's very right too. This is a kind of waste-book, Owen, in which all the transactions of the day, emptions, orders, payments, receipts, acceptances, draughts, commissions, and advices are entered miscellaneously.'

'That they may be regularly transferred to the day-book and ledger,' answered Owen. 'I am glad Mr. Francis is so methodical.'

I perceived myself getting so fast into favour that I began to fear the consequence would be my father's more obstinate perseverance in his resolution that I must become a merchant; and, as I was determined on the contrary, I began to wish I had not, to use my friend Mr. Owen's phrase, been so methodical. But I had no reason for apprehension on that score; for a blotted piece of paper dropped out of the book, and, being taken up by my father, he interrupted a hint from Owen on the propriety of securing loose memoranda with a little paste by exclaiming, 'To the memory of Edward the Black Prince. What's all this? verses! By Heaven, Frank, you are a greater blockhead than I supposed you!'

My father, you must recollect, as a man of business, looked upon the labour of poets with contempt; and as a religious man, and of the dissenting persuasion, he considered all such pursuits as equally trivial and profane. Before you condemn him, you must recall to remembrance how too many of the poets in the end of the seventeenth century had led their lives and employed their talents. The sect also to which my father belonged felt, or perhaps affected, a puritanical aversion to the lighter exertions of literature. So that many causes contributed to augment the unpleasant surprise occasioned by the ill-timed discovery of this unfortunate copy of verses. As for poor Owen, could the bob-wig which he then wore have uncurled itself and stood on end with horror, I am convinced the morning's labour of the friseur would have been undone, merely by the excess of his astonishment at this enormity. An inroad on the strong-box, or an erasure in the ledger, or a missummation in a fitted account, could hardly have surprised him more disagreeably. My father read the lines sometimes with an affectation of not being able to understand the sense, sometimes in a mouthing tone of mock heroic, always with an emphasis of the most bitter irony, most irritating to the nerves of an author.

'O for the voice of that wild horn,
On Fontarabian echoes borne,
The dying hero's call,
That told imperial Charlemagne,
How paynim sons of swarthy Spain
Had wrought his champion's fall.

Fontarabian echoes!' continued my father, interrupting himself; 'the Fontarabian Fair would have been more to the pur-

pose. Paynim! What's paynim? Could you not say pagan as well, and write English, at least, if you must needs write nonsense?

Sad over earth and ocean sounding,
And England's distant cliffs astounding,
Such are the notes should say
How Britain's hope and France's fear,
Victor of Cressy and Poitier,
In Bourdeaux dying lay.

Poitiers, by the way, is always spelt with an *s*, and I know no reason why orthography should give place to rhyme.

"Raise my faint head, my squires," he said,
"And let the casement be display'd,
That I may see once more
The splendour of the setting sun
Gleam on thy mirror'd wave, Garonne,
And Blaye's empurpled shore."

"Garonne" and "sun" is a bad rhyme. Why, Frank, you do not even understand the beggarly trade you have chosen.

"Like me, he sinks to Glory's sleep,
His fall the dews of evening steep,
As if in sorrow shed.
So soft shall fall the trickling tear,
When England's maids and matrons hear
Of their Black Edward dead.

"And though my sun of glory set,
Nor France, nor England shall forget
The terror of my name;
And oft shall Britain's heroes rise,
New planets in these southern skies,
Through clouds of blood and flame."

A cloud of flame is something new. "Good-morrow, my masters all, and a merry Christmas to you!" Why, the bell-man writes better lines.' He then tossed the paper from him with an air of superlative contempt, and concluded, 'Upon my credit, Frank, you are a greater blockhead than I took you for.'

What could I say, my dear Tresham? There I stood, swelling with indignant mortification, while my father regarded me with a calm but stern look of scorn and pity; and poor Owen, with uplifted hands and eyes, looked as striking a picture of horror as if he had just read his patron's name in

the *Gazette*. At length I took courage to speak, endeavouring that my tone of voice should betray my feelings as little as possible. 'I am quite aware, sir, how ill qualified I am to play the conspicuous part in society you have destined for me; and, luckily, I am not ambitious of the wealth I might acquire. Mr. Owen would be a much more effective assistant.' I said this in some malice, for I considered Owen as having deserted my cause a little too soon.

'Owen?' said my father. 'The boy is mad, actually insane. And pray, sir, if I may presume to inquire, having coolly turned me over to Mr. Owen — although I may expect more attention from any one than from my son — what may your own sage projects be?'

'I should wish, sir,' I replied, summoning up my courage, 'to travel for two or three years, should that consist with your pleasure; otherwise, although late, I would willingly spend the same time at Oxford or Cambridge.'

'In the name of common sense! was the like ever heard? to put yourself to school among pedants and Jacobites, when you might be pushing your fortune in the world! Why not go to Westminster or Eton at once, man, and take to Lilly's Grammar and Accidence, and to the birch too, if you like it?'

'Then, sir, if you think my plan of improvement too late, I would willingly return to the Continent.'

'You have already spent too much time there to little purpose, Mr. Francis.'

'Then I would choose the army, sir, in preference to any other active line of life.'

'Choose the d—l,' answered my father, hastily, and then checking himself — 'I profess you make me as great a fool as you are yourself. Is he not enough to drive one mad, Owen?' Poor Owen shook his head and looked down. 'Hark ye, Frank,' continued my father, 'I will cut all this matter very short; I was at your age when my father turned me out of doors and settled my legal inheritance on my younger brother. I left Osbaldistone Hall on the back of a broken-down hunter, with ten guineas in my purse. I have never crossed the threshold again, and I never will. I know not, and I care not, if my fox-hunting brother is alive or has broken his neck; but he has children, Frank, and one of them shall be my son if you cross me farther in this matter.'

'You will do your pleasure,' I answered, rather, I fear, with

more sullen indifference than respect, 'with what is your own.'

'Yes, Frank, what I have *is* my own, if labour in getting and care in augmenting can make a right of property; and no drone shall feed on my honeycomb. Think on it well; what I have said is not without reflection, and what I resolve upon I will execute.'

'Honoured sir — dear sir,' exclaimed Owen, tears rushing into his eyes, 'you are not wont to be in such a hurry in transacting business of importance. Let Mr. Francis run up the balance before you shut the account; he loves you, I am sure; and when he puts down his filial obedience to the *per contra* I am sure his objections will disappear.'

'Do you think I will ask him twice,' said my father, sternly, 'to be my friend, my assistant, and my confidant? to be a partner of my cares and of my fortune? Owen, I thought you had known me better.'

He looked at me as if he meant to add something more, but turned instantly away and left the room abruptly. I was, I own, affected by this view of the case, which had not occurred to me; and my father would probably have had little reason to complain of me had he commenced the discussion with this argument.

But it was too late. I had much of his own obduracy of resolution, and Heaven had decreed that my sin should be my punishment, though not to the extent which my transgression merited. Owen, when we were left alone, continued to look at me with eyes which tears from time to time moistened, as if to discover, before attempting the task of intercessor, upon what point my obstinacy was most assailable. At length he began, with broken and disconcerted accents — 'O L—d, Mr. Francis! Good Heavens, sir! My stars, Mr. Osbaldistone! that I should ever have seen this day; and you so young a gentleman, sir. For the love of Heaven! look at both sides of the account. Think what you are going to lose — a noble fortune, sir, one of the finest houses in the City, even under the old firm of Tresham and Trent, and now Osbaldistone and Tresham. You might roll in gold, Mr. Francis. And, my dear young Mr. Frank, if there was any particular thing in the business of the house which you disliked, I would (sinking his voice to a whisper) put it in order for you termly or weekly or daily if you will. Do, my dear Mr. Francis, think of the honour due to your father, that your days may be long in the land.'

'I am much obliged to you, Mr. Owen,' said I — 'very much obliged indeed; but my father is best judge how to bestow his money. He talks of one of my cousins; let him dispose of his wealth as he pleases, I will never sell my liberty for gold.'

'Gold, sir? I wish you saw the balance-sheet of profits at last term. It was in five figures — five figures to each partner's share total, Mr. Frank. And all this is to go to a Papist, and a north-country booby, and a disaffected person besides. It will break my heart, Mr. Francis, that have been toiling more like a dog than a man, and all for love of the firm. Think how it will sound, Osbaldistone, Tresham, and Osbaldistone; or, perhaps, who knows (again lowering his voice), Osbaldistone, Osbaldistone, and Tresham, for our Mr. Osbaldistone can buy them all out.'

'But, Mr. Owen, my cousin's name being also Osbaldistone, the name of the company will sound every bit as well in your ears.'

'O, fie upon you, Mr. Francis, when you know how well I love you. Your cousin, indeed! a Papist, no doubt, like his father, and a disaffected person to the Protestant succession — that's another item, doubtless.'

'There are many very good men Catholics, Mr. Owen,' rejoined I.

As Owen was about to answer with unusual animation my father re-entered the apartment.

'You were right,' he said, 'Owen, and I was wrong; we will take more time to think over this matter. Young man, you will prepare to give me an answer on this important subject this day month.'

I bowed in silence, sufficiently glad of a reprieve, and trusting it might indicate some relaxation in my father's determination.

The time of probation passed slowly, unmarked by any accident whatever. I went and came and disposed of my time as I pleased, without question or criticism on the part of my father. Indeed, I rarely saw him save at meal-times, when he studiously avoided a discussion which you may well suppose I was in no hurry to press onward. Our conversation was of the news of the day, or on such general topics as strangers discourse upon to each other; nor could any one have guessed from its tenor that there remained undecided betwixt us a dispute of such importance. It haunted me, however, more than once, like the nightmare. Was it possible he would keep

his word and disinherit his only son in favour of a nephew whose very existence he was not perhaps quite certain of? My grandfather's conduct in similar circumstances boded me no good, had I considered the matter rightly. But I had formed an erroneous idea of my father's character, from the importance which I recollected I maintained with him and his whole family before I went to France. I was not aware that there are men who indulge their children at an early age, because to do so interests and amuses them, and who can yet be sufficiently severe when the same children cross their expectations at a more advanced period. On the contrary, I persuaded myself that all I had to apprehend was some temporary alienation of affection — perhaps a rustication of a few weeks, which I thought would rather please me than otherwise, since it would give me an opportunity of setting about my unfinished version of *Orlando Furioso*, a poem which I longed to render into English verse. I suffered this belief to get such absolute possession of my mind that I had resumed my blotted papers, and was busy in meditation on the oft-recurring rhymes of the Spenserian stanza, when I heard a low and cautious tap at the door of my apartment. 'Come in,' I said, and Mr. Owen entered. So regular were the motions and habits of this worthy man, that in all probability this was the first time he had ever been in the second story of his patron's house, however conversant with the first; and I am still at a loss to know in what manner he discovered my apartment.

'Mr. Francis,' he said, interrupting my expressions of surprise and pleasure at seeing him, 'I do not know if I am doing well in what I am about to say: it is not right to speak of what passes in the counting-house out of doors — one should not tell, as they say, to the post in the warehouse how many lines there are in the ledger. But young Twineall has been absent from the house for a fortnight and more, until two days since.'

'Very well, my dear sir, and how does that concern us?'

'Stay, Mr. Francis; your father gave him a private commission; and I am sure he did not go down to Falmouth about the pilchard affair; and the Exeter business with Blackwell and Company has been settled; and the mining people in Cornwall, Trevanion and Treguilliam, have paid all they are likely to pay; and any other matter of business must have been put through my books; in short, it's my faithful belief that Twineall has been down in the north.'

'Do you really suppose so?' said I, somewhat startled.

'He has spoken about nothing, sir, since he returned, but his new boots and his Rippon spurs and a cock-fight at York ; it's as true as the multiplication-table. Do, Heaven bless you, my dear child, make up your mind to please your father, and to be a man and a merchant at once.'

I felt at that instant a strong inclination to submit, and to make Owen happy by requesting him to tell my father that I resigned myself to his disposal. But pride — pride, the source of so much that is good and so much that is evil in our course of life, prevented me. My acquiescence stuck in my throat, and while I was coughing to get it up my father's voice summoned Owen. He hastily left the room, and the opportunity was lost.

My father was methodical in everything. At the very same time of the day, in the same apartment, and with the same tone and manner which he had employed an exact month before, he recapitulated the proposal he had made for taking me into partnership, and assigning me a department in the counting-house, and requested to have my final decision. I thought at the time there was something unkind in this ; and I still think that my father's conduct was injudicious. A more conciliatory treatment would in all probability have gained his purpose. As it was I stood fast, and as respectfully as I could declined the proposal he made to me. Perhaps — for who can judge of their own heart ? — I felt it unmanly to yield on the first summons, and expected farther solicitation as at least a pretext for changing my mind. If so, I was disappointed ; for my father turned coolly to Owen, and said, 'You see it is as I told you. Well, Frank (addressing me), you are nearly of age, and as well qualified to judge of what will constitute your own happiness as you ever are likely to be ; therefore, I say no more. But as I am not bound to give in to your plans, any more than you are compelled to submit to mine, may I ask to know if you have formed any which depend on my assistance ?'

I answered, not a little abashed, 'That being bred to no profession, and having no funds of my own, it was obviously impossible for me to subsist without some allowance from my father ; that my wishes were very moderate ; and that I hoped my aversion for the profession to which he had designed me would not occasion his altogether withdrawing his paternal support and protection.'

'That is to say, you wish to lean on my arm and yet to

walk your own way? That can hardly be, Frank; however, I suppose you mean to obey my directions so far as they do not cross your own humour?

I was about to speak. 'Silence, if you please,' he continued. 'Supposing this to be the case, you will instantly set out for the North of England, to pay your uncle a visit and see the state of his family. I have chosen from among his sons — he has six, I believe — one who, I understand, is most worthy to fill the place I intended for you in the counting-house. But some farther arrangements may be necessary, and for these your presence may be requisite. You shall have farther instructions at Osbaldistone Hall, where you will please to remain until you hear from me. Everything will be ready for your departure to-morrow morning.'

With these words my father left the apartment.

'What does all this mean, Mr. Owen?' said I to my sympathetic friend, whose countenance wore a cast of the deepest dejection.

'You have ruined yourself, Mr. Frank, that's all; when your father talks in that quiet determined manner there will be no more change in him than in a fitted account.'

And so it proved; for the next morning, at five o'clock, I found myself on the road to York, mounted on a reasonably good horse, and with fifty guineas in my pocket; travelling, as it would seem, for the purpose of assisting in the adoption of a successor to myself in my father's house and favour, and, for aught I knew, eventually in his fortune also.

CHAPTER III

The slack sail shifts from side to side,
The boat, untrimm'd, admits the tide,
Borne down, adrift, at random tost,
The oar breaks short, the rudder's lost.

GAY'S *Fables*.

I HAVE tagged with rhyme and blank verse the subdivisions of this important narrative, in order to seduce your continued attention by powers of composition of stronger attraction than my own. The preceding lines refer to an unfortunate navigator who daringly unloosed from its moorings a boat which he was unable to manage, and thrust it off into the full tide of a navigable river. No school-boy who, betwixt frolic and defiance, has executed a similar rash attempt could feel himself, when adrift in a strong current, in a situation more awkward than mine when I found myself driving, without a compass, on the ocean of human life. There had been such unexpected ease in the manner in which my father slipt a knot usually esteemed the strongest which binds society together, and suffered me to depart as a sort of outcast from his family, that it strangely lessened the confidence in my own personal accomplishments which had hitherto sustained me. Prince Prettyman, now a prince and now a fisher's son, had not a more awkward sense of his degradation. We are so apt, in our engrossing egotism, to consider all those accessories which are drawn around us by prosperity as pertaining and belonging to our own persons, that the discovery of our unimportance, when left to our own proper resources, becomes inexpressibly mortifying. As the hum of London died away on my ear, the distant peal of her steeples more than once sounded to my ears the admonitory 'Turn again' erst heard by her future Lord Mayor; and when I looked back from Highgate on her dusky magnificence, I felt as if I were leaving behind me comfort, opulence, the charms of society, and all the pleasures of cultivated life.

But the die was cast. It was, indeed, by no means probable that a late and ungracious compliance with my father's wishes would have reinstated me in the situation which I had lost. On the contrary, firm and strong of purpose as he himself was, he might rather have been disgusted than conciliated by my tardy and compulsory acquiescence in his desire that I should engage in commerce. My constitutional obstinacy came also to my aid, and pride whispered how poor a figure I should make when an airing of four miles from London had blown away resolutions formed during a month's serious deliberation. Hope, too, that never forsakes the young and hardy, lent her lustre to my future prospects. My father could not be serious in the sentence of *foris-filiation* which he had so unhesitatingly pronounced. It must be but a trial of my disposition, which, endured with patience and steadiness on my part, would raise me in his estimation, and lead to an amicable accommodation of the point in dispute between us. I even settled in my own mind how far I would concede to him, and on what articles of our supposed treaty I would make a firm stand; and the result was, according to my computation, that I was to be reinstated in my full rights of filiation, paying the easy penalty of some ostensible compliances to atone for my past rebellion.

In the meanwhile I was lord of my person, and experienced that feeling of independence which the youthful bosom receives with a thrilling mixture of pleasure and apprehension. My purse, though by no means amply replenished, was in a situation to supply all the wants and wishes of a traveller. I had been accustomed, while at Bourdeaux, to act as my own valet; my horse was fresh, young, and active, and the buoyancy of my spirits soon surmounted the melancholy reflections with which my journey commenced.

I should have been glad to have journeyed upon a line of road better calculated to afford reasonable objects of curiosity, or a more interesting country to the traveller. But the north road was then, and perhaps still is, singularly deficient in these respects; nor do I believe you can travel so far through Britain in any other direction without meeting more of what is worthy to engage the attention. My mental ruminations, notwithstanding my assumed confidence, were not always of an unchequered nature. The Muse too — the very coquette who had led me into this wilderness — like others of her sex, deserted me in my utmost need; and I should have been reduced to rather an uncomfortable state of dulness had it not been for

the occasional conversation of strangers who chanced to pass the same way. But the characters whom I met with were of a uniform and uninteresting description. Country parsons, jogging homewards after a visitation ; farmers or graziers returning from a distant market ; clerks of traders, travelling to collect what was due to their masters in provincial towns ; with now and then an officer going down into the country upon the recruiting service, were at this period the persons by whom the turn-pikes and tapsters were kept in exercise. Our speech, therefore, was of tithes and creeds, of beeves and grain, of commodities wet and dry, and the solvency of the retail dealers, occasionally varied by the description of a siege or battle in Flanders, which, perhaps, the narrator only gave me at second hand. Robbers, a fertile and alarming theme, filled up every vacancy ; and the names of the Golden Farmer, the Flying Highwayman, Jack Needham, and other *Beggar's Opera* heroes, were familiar in our mouths as household words. At such tales, like children closing their circle round the fire when the ghost story draws to its climax, the riders drew near to each other, looked before and behind them, examined the priming of their pistols, and vowed to stand by each other in case of danger ; an engagement which, like other offensive and defensive alliances, sometimes glided out of remembrance when there was an appearance of actual peril.

Of all the fellows whom I ever saw haunted by terrors of this nature, one poor man with whom I travelled a day and a half afforded me most amusement. He had upon his pillion a very small, but apparently a very weighty, portmanteau, about the safety of which he seemed particularly solicitous, never trusting it out of his own immediate care, and uniformly repressing the officious zeal of the waiters and ostlers, who offered their services to carry it into the house. With the same precaution he laboured to conceal, not only the purpose of his journey and his ultimate place of destination, but even the direction of each day's route. Nothing embarrassed him more than to be asked by any one whether he was travelling upwards or downwards, or at what stage he intended to bait. His place of rest for the night he scrutinised with the most anxious care, alike avoiding solitude and what he considered as bad neighbourhood ; and at Grantham I believe he sate up all night to avoid sleeping in the next room to a thick-set squinting fellow in a black wig and a tarnished gold-laced waistcoat. With all these cares on his mind, my fellow-traveller, to judge by his thewes and sinews, was a man who might have set danger

at defiance with as much impunity as most men. He was strong and well-built ; and, judging from his gold-laced hat and cockade, seemed to have served in the army, or at least to belong to the military profession in one capacity or other. His conversation also, though always sufficiently vulgar, was that of a man of sense, when the terrible bugbears which haunted his imagination for a moment ceased to occupy his attention. But every accidental association recalled them. An open heath, a close plantation, were alike subjects of apprehension ; and the whistle of a shepherd lad was instantly converted into the signal of a depredator. Even the sight of a gibbet, if it assured him that one robber was safely disposed of by justice, never failed to remind him how many remained still unchanged.

I should have wearied of this fellow's company had I not been still more tired of my own thoughts. Some of the marvellous stories, however, which he related had in themselves a cast of interest, and another whimsical point of his peculiarities afforded me the occasional opportunity of amusing myself at his expense. Among his tales, several of the unfortunate travellers who fell among thieves incurred that calamity from associating themselves on the road with a well-dressed and entertaining stranger, in whose company they trusted to find protection as well as amusement ; who cheered their journey with tale and song, protected them against the evils of overcharges and false reckonings, until at length, under pretext of showing a near path over a desolate common, he seduced his unsuspecting victims from the public road into some dismal glen, where, suddenly blowing his whistle, he assenbled his comrades from their lurking-place, and displayed himself in his true colours, the captain, namely, of the band of robbers to whom his unwary fellow-travellers had forfeited their purses, and perhaps their lives. Towards the conclusion of such a tale, and when my companion had wrought himself into a fever of apprehension by the progress of his own narrative, I observed that he usually eyed me with a glance of doubt and suspicion, as if the possibility occurred to him that he might, at that very moment, be in company with a character as dangerous as that which his tale described. And ever and anon, when such suggestions pressed themselves on the mind of this ingenious self-tormentor, he drew off from me to the opposite side of the highroad, looked before, behind, and around him, examined his arms, and seemed to prepare himself for flight or defence, as circumstances might require.

The suspicion implied on such occasions seemed to me only momentary, and too ludicrous to be offensive. There was, in fact, no particular reflection on my dress or address, although I was thus mistaken for a robber. A man in those days might have all the external appearance of a gentleman and yet turn out to be a highwayman. For the division of labour in every department not having then taken place so fully as since that period, the profession of the polite and accomplished adventurer who nicked you out of your money at White's, or bowled you out of it at Marybone, was often united with that of the professed ruffian who, on Bagshot Heath or Finchley Common, commanded his brother beau to stand and deliver. There was also a touch of coarseness and hardness about the manners of the times, which has since in a great degree been softened and shaded away. It seems to me, on recollection, as if desperate men had less reluctance then than now to embrace the most desperate means of retrieving their fortune. The times were indeed past when Anthony a' Wood mourned over the execution of two men, goodly in person and of undisputed courage and honour, who were hanged without mercy at Oxford merely because their distress had driven them to raise contributions on the highway. We were still farther removed from the days of 'the mad Prince and Pains.' And yet, from the number of uninclosed and extensive heaths in the vicinity of the metropolis, and from the less populous state of remote districts, both were frequented by that species of mounted highwaymen that may possibly become one day unknown, who carried on their trade with something like courtesy; and, like Gibbet in the *Beaux Stratagem*, piqued themselves on being the best behaved men on the road, and on conducting themselves with all appropriate civility in the exercise of their vocation. A young man, therefore, in my circumstances was not entitled to be highly indignant at the mistake which confounded him with this worshipful class of depredators.

Neither was I offended. On the contrary, I found amusement in alternately exciting and lulling to sleep the suspicions of my timorous companion, and in purposely so acting as still farther to puzzle a brain which nature and apprehension had combined to render none of the clearest. When my free conversation had lulled him into complete security, it required only a passing inquiry concerning the direction of his journey, or the nature of the business which occasioned it, to put his suspicions once more in arms. For example, a conversation on

the comparative strength and activity of our horses took such a turn as follows : —

‘O sir,’ said my companion, ‘for the gallop, I grant you ; but allow me to say, your horse, although he is a very handsome gelding, that must be owned, has too little bone to be a good roadster. The trot, sir (striking his Bucephalus with his spurs) — the trot is the true pace for a hackney ; and, were we near a town, I should like to try that daisy-cutter of yours upon a piece of level road — barring canter — for a quart of claret at the next inn.’

‘Content, sir,’ replied I ; ‘and here is a stretch of ground very favourable.’

‘Hem, ahem,’ answered my friend, with hesitation ; ‘I make it a rule of travelling never to blow my horse between stages. One never knows what occasion he may have to put him to his mettle ; and besides, sir, when I said I would match you, I meant with even weight, you ride four stone lighter than I.’

‘Very well ; but I am content to carry weight. Pray what may that portmanteau of yours weigh ?’

‘My p—p—portmanteau ?’ replied he, hesitating. ‘O very little — a feather — just a few shirts and stockings.’

‘I should think it heavier, from its appearance. I’ll hold you the quart of claret it makes the odds betwixt our weight.’

‘You’re mistaken, sir, I assure you — quite mistaken,’ replied my friend, edging off to the side of the road, as was his wont on these alarming occasions.

‘Well, I’m willing to venture the wine ; or I will bet you ten pieces to five that I carry your portmanteau on my croupe and out-trot you into the bargain.’

This proposal raised my friend’s alarm to the uttermost. His nose changed from the natural copper hue which it had acquired from many a comfortable cup of claret or sack into a palish brassy tint, and his teeth chattered with apprehension at the unveiled audacity of my proposal, which seemed to place the bare-faced plunderer before him in full atrocity. As he faltered for an answer, I relieved him in some degree by a question concerning a steeple which now became visible, and an observation that we were now so near the village as to run no risk from interruption on the road. At this his countenance cleared up ; but I easily perceived that it was long ere he forgot a proposal which seemed to him so fraught with suspicion as that which I had now hazarded. I trouble you with this detail of the man’s disposition, and the manner in which I

practised upon it, because, however trivial in themselves, these particulars were attended by an important influence on future incidents which will occur in this narrative. At the time this person's conduct only inspired me with contempt, and confirmed me in an opinion, which I already entertained, that, of all the propensities which teach mankind to torment themselves, that of causeless fear is the most irritating, busy, painful, and pitiable.

CHAPTER IV

The Scots are poor, cries surly English pride.
True is the charge ; nor by themselves denied.
Are they not, then, in strictest reason clear,
Who wisely come to mend their fortunes here ?

CHURCHILL.

THERE was, in the days of which I write, an old-fashioned custom on the English road, which I suspect is now obsolete, or practised only by the vulgar. Journeys of length being made on horseback, and of course by brief stages, it was usual always to make a halt on the Sunday in some town where the traveller might attend divine service, and his horse have the benefit of the day of rest, the institution of which is as humane to our brute labourers as profitable to ourselves. A counterpart to this decent practice, and a remnant of old English hospitality, was, that the landlord of a principal inn laid aside his character of publican on the seventh day, and invited the guests who chanced to be within his walls to take a part of his family beef and pudding. This invitation was usually complied with by all whose distinguished rank did not induce them to think compliance a derogation ; and the proposal of a bottle of wine after dinner to drink the landlord's health was the only recompense ever offered or accepted.

I was born a citizen of the world, and my inclination led me into all scenes where my knowledge of mankind could be enlarged ; I had, besides, no pretensions to sequester myself on the score of superior dignity, and therefore seldom failed to accept of the Sunday's hospitality of mine host, whether of the Garter, Lion, or Bear. The honest publican, dilated into additional consequence by a sense of his own importance while presiding among the guests on whom it was his ordinary duty to attend, was in himself an entertaining spectacle ; and around his genial orbit other planets of inferior consequence performed their revolutions. The wits and humorists, the distinguished

worthies of the town or village, the apothecary, the attorney, even the curate himself, did not disdain to partake of this hebdomadal festivity. The guests, assembled from different quarters and following different professions, formed, in language, manners, and sentiments, a curious contrast to each other, not indifferent to those who desired to possess a knowledge of mankind in its varieties.

It was on such a day and such an occasion that my timorous acquaintance and I were about to grace the board of the ruddy-faced host of the Black Bear, in the town of Darlington and bishoprick of Durham, when our landlord informed us, with a sort of apologetic tone, that there was a Scotch gentleman to dine with us.

'A gentleman! what sort of a gentleman?' said my companion, somewhat hastily, his mind, I suppose, running on gentlemen of the pad, as they were then termed.

'Why, a Scotch sort of a gentleman, as I said before,' returned mine host; 'they are all gentle, ye mun know, though they ha' narra shirt to back; but this is a decentish hallion—a canny North Briton as e'er cross'd Berwick bridge. I trow he's a dealer in cattle.'

'Let us have his company by all means,' answered my companion; and then, turning to me, he gave vent to the tenor of his own reflections. 'I respect the Scotch, sir; I love and honour the nation for their sense of morality. Men talk of their filth and their poverty; but commend me to sterling honesty, though clad in rags, as the poet saith. I have been credibly assured, sir, by men on whom I can depend, that there was never known such a thing in Scotland as a highway robbery.'

'That's because they have nothing to lose,' said mine host, with the chuckle of a self-applauding wit.

'No, no, landlord,' answered a strong deep voice behind him, 'it's e'en because your English gaugers and supervisors,¹ that you have sent down benorth the Tweed, have taen up the trade of thievery over the heads of the native professors.'

'Well said, Mr. Campbell!' answered the landlord; 'I did nat think thoud'st been sae near us, mon. But thou kens I'm an outspoken Yorkshire tyke. And how go markets in the south?'

'Even in the ordinar,' replied Mr. Campbell; 'wise folks buy and sell, and fools are bought and sold.'

¹ The introduction of gaugers, supervisors, and examiners was one of the great complaints of the Scottish nation, though a natural consequence of the Union.

'But wise men and fools both eat their dinner,' answered our jolly entertainer; 'and here a comes — as prime a buttock of beef as e'er hungry mon stuck fork in.'

So saying, he eagerly whetted his knife, assumed his seat of empire at the head of the board, and loaded the plates of his sundry guests with his good cheer.

This was the first time I had heard the Scottish accent, or, indeed, that I had familiarly met with an individual of the ancient nation by whom it was spoken. Yet from an early period they had occupied and interested my imagination. My father, as is well known to you, was of an ancient family in Northumberland, from whose seat I was, while eating the afore-said dinner, not very many miles distant. The quarrel betwixt him and his relatives was such that he scarcely ever mentioned the race from which he sprung, and held as the most contemptible species of vanity the weakness which is commonly termed family pride. His ambition was only to be distinguished as William Osbaldistone, the first, at least one of the first, merchants on 'Change; and to have proved him the lineal representative of William the Conqueror would have far less flattered his vanity than the hum and bustle which his approach was wont to produce among the bulls, bears, and brokers of Stock Alley. He wished, no doubt, that I should remain in such ignorance of my relatives and descent as might ensure a correspondence between my feelings and his own on this subject. But his designs, as will happen occasionally to the wisest, were, in some degree at least, counteracted by a being whom his pride would never have supposed of importance adequate to influence them in any way. His nurse, an old Northumbrian woman, attached to him from his infancy, was the only person connected with his native province for whom he retained any regard; and when fortune dawned upon him one of the first uses which he made of her favours was to give Mabel Rickets a place of residence within his household. After the death of my mother, the care of nursing me during my childish illnesses, and of rendering all those tender attentions which infancy exacts from female affection, devolved on old Mabel. Interdicted by her master from speaking to him on the subject of the heaths, glades, and dales of her beloved Northumberland, she poured herself forth to my infant ear in descriptions of the scenes of her youth, and long narratives of the events which tradition declared to have passed amongst them. To these I inclined my ear much more seriously than to graver

but less animated instructora. Even yet methinks I see old Mabel, her head slightly agitated by the palsy of age, and shaded by a close cap, as white as the driven snow; her face wrinkled, but still retaining the healthy tinge which it had acquired in rural labour — I think I see her look around on the brick walls and narrow street which presented themselves from our windows, as she concluded with a sigh the favourite old ditty, which I then preferred, and — why should I not tell the truth? — which I still prefer to all the opera airs ever minted by the capricious brain of an Italian Mus. D. —

Oh, the oak, the ash, and the bonny ivy tree,
They flourish best at home in the North Country!

Now in the legends of Mabel the Scottish nation was ever freshly remembered, with all the embittered declamation of which the narrator was capable. The inhabitants of the opposite frontier served in her narratives to fill up the parts which ogres and giants with seven-leagued boots occupy in the ordinary nursery tales. And how could it be otherwise? Was it not the Black Douglas who slew with his own hand the heir of the Osbaldistone family the day after he took possession of his estate, surprising him and his vassals while solemnising a feast suited to the occasion? Was it not Wat the Devil who drove all the year-old hogs off the braes of Lanthorn side, in the very recent days of my grandfather's father? And had we not many a trophy, but, according to old Mabel's version of history, far more honourably gained, to mark our revenge of these wrongs? Did not Sir Henry Osbaldistone, fifth baron of the name, carry off the fair maid of Fairnington, as Achilles did his Chryseis and Briseis of old, and detain her in his fortress against all the power of her friends, supported by the most mighty Scottish chiefs of warlike fame? And had not our swords shone foremost at most of those fields in which England was victorious over her rival? All our family renown was acquired, all our family misfortunes were occasioned, by the northern wars.

Warned by such tales, I looked upon the Scottish people during my childhood as a race hostile by nature to the more southern inhabitants of this realm; and this view of the matter was not much corrected by the language which my father sometimes held with respect to them. He had engaged in some large speculations concerning oak-woods, the property of Highland proprietors, and alleged that he found them much more

ready to make bargains, and extort earnest of the purchase-money, then punctual in complying on their side with the terms of the engagements. The Scotch mercantile men, whom he was under the necessity of employing as a sort of middlemen on these occasions, were also suspected by my father of having secured, by one means or other, more than their own share of the profit which ought to have accrued. In short, if Mabel complained of the Scottish arms in ancient times, Mr. Osbaldistone inveighed no less against the arms of these modern Sinons; and between them, though without any fixed purpose of doing so, they impressed my youthful mind with a sincere aversion to the northern inhabitants of Britain, as a people bloodthirsty in time of war, treacherous during truce, interested, selfish, avaricious, and tricky in the business of peaceful life, and having few good qualities, unless there should be accounted such a ferocity which resembled courage in martial affairs, and a sort of wily craft, which supplied the place of wisdom in the ordinary commerce of mankind. In justification or apology for those who entertained such prejudices, I must remark that the Scotch of that period were guilty of similar injustice to the English, whom they branded universally as a race of purse-proud arrogant epicures. Such seeds of national dislike remained between the two countries, the natural consequences of their existence as separate and rival states. We have seen recently the breath of a demagogue blow these sparks into a temporary flame, which I sincerely hope is now extinguished in its own ashes.¹

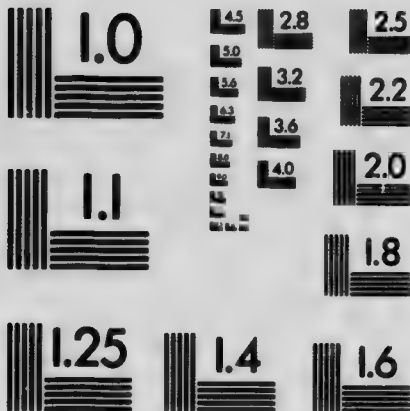
It was, then, with an impression of dislike that I contemplated the first Scotchman I chanced to meet in society. There was much about him that coincided with my previous conceptions. He had the hard features and athletic form said to be peculiar to his country, together with the national intonation and slow pedantic mode of expression, arising from a desire to avoid peculiarities of idiom or dialect. I could also observe the caution and shrewdness of his country in many of the observations which he made and the answers which he returned. But I was not prepared for the air of easy self-possession and superiority with which he seemed to predominate over the company into which he was thrown, as it were by accident. His dress was as coarse as it could be, being still decent; and, at a time when great expense was lavished upon the wardrobe, even of the lowest who pretended to the character of gentlemen,

¹ This seems to have been written about the time of Wilkes and Liberty.
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this indicated mediocrity of circumstances, if not proverty. His conversation intimated that he was engaged in the cattle-trade, no very dignified professional pursuit. And yet, under these disadvantages, he seemed as a matter of course to treat the rest of the company with the cool and condescending politeness which implies a real or imagined superiority over those towards whom it is used. When he gave his opinion on any point, it was with that easy tone of confidence used by those superior to their society in rank or information, as if what he said could not be doubted, and was not to be questioned. Mine host and his Sunday guests, after an effort or two to support their consequence by noise and bold averment, sunk gradually under the authority of Mr. Campbell, who thus fairly possessed himself of the lead in the conversation. I was tempted from curiosity to dispute the ground with him myself, confiding in my knowledge of the world, extended as it was by my residence abroad, and in the stores with which a tolerable education had possessed my mind. In the latter respect he offered no competition, and it was easy to see that his natural powers had never been cultivated by education. But I found him much better acquainted than I was myself with the present state of France, the character of the Duke of Orleans, who had just succeeded to the regency of that kingdom, and that of the statesmen by whom he was surrounded; and his shrewd, caustic, and somewhat satirical remarks were those of a man who had been a close observer of the affairs of that country.

On the subject of politics Campbell observed a silence and moderation which might arise from caution. The divisions of Whig and Tory then shook England to her very centre, and a powerful party, engaged in the Jacobite interest, menaced the dynasty of Hanover, which had been just established on the throne. Every ale-house resounded with the brawls of contending politicians, and as mine host's politics were of that liberal description which quarrelled with no good customer, his hebdomadal visitants were often divided in their opinion as irreconcilably as if he had feasted the Common Council. The curate and the apothecary, with a little man who made no boast of his vocation, but who, from the flourish and snap of his fingers, I believe to have been the barber, strongly espoused the cause of High Church and the Stuart line. The exciseman, as in duty bound, and the attorney, who looked to some petty office under the crown, together with my fellow-traveller, who seemed to enter keenly into the contest, staunchly supported the cause

of King George and the Protestant succession. Dire was the screaming, deep the oaths! Each party appealed to Mr. Campbell, anxious, it seemed, to elicit his approbation.

'You are a Scotchman, sir; a gentleman of your country must stand up for hereditary right,' cried one party.

'You are a Presbyterian,' assumed the other class of disputants; 'you cannot be a friend to arbitrary power.'

'Gentlemen,' said our Scotch oracle, after having gained, with some difficulty, a moment's pause, 'I hevena much dubitation that King George weel deserves the predilection of his friends; and if he can hand the grip he has gotten, why, doubtless, he may make the gauger here a commissioner of the revenue, and confer on our friend, Mr. Quitam, the preferment of solicitor-general; and he may also grant some good deed or reward to this honest gentleman who is sitting upon his portmanteau, which he prefers to a chair. And, questionless, King James is also a grateful person, and when he gets his hand in play he may, if he be so minded, make this reverend gentleman arch-bishop of Canterbury, and Dr. Mixit chief physician to his household, and commit his royal beard to the care of my friend Latherum. But as I doubt mickle whether any of the competing sovereigns would give Rob Campbell a tass of aquavita, if he lacked it, I give my vote and interest to Jonathan Brown, our landlord, to be the king and prince of skinkers, conditionally that he fetches us another bottle as good as the last.'

This sally was received with general applause, in which the landlord cordially joined; and when he had given orders for fulfilling the condition on which his preferment was to depend, he failed not to acquaint them 'that, for as peaceable a gentleman as Mr. Campbell was, he was, moreover, as bold as a lion — seven highwaymen had he defeated with his single arm that beset him as he came from Whitson Tryste.'

'Thou art deceived, friend Jonathan,' said Campbell, interrupting him; 'they were but barely two, and two cowardly loons as man could wish to meet withal.'

'And did you, sir, really,' said my fellow-traveller, edging his chair — I should have said his portmanteau — nearer to Mr. Campbell — 'really and actually beat two highwaymen yourself alone?'

'In troth did I, sir,' replied Campbell; 'and I think it nae great thing to make a sang about.'

'Upon my word, sir,' replied my acquaintance, 'I should be

happy to have the pleasure of your company on my journey ; I go northward, sir.'

This piece of gratuitous information concerning the route he proposed to himself, the first I had heard my companion bestow upon any one, failed to excite the corresponding confidence of the Scotchman.

'We can scarce travel together,' he replied, drily. 'You, sir, doubtless, are well mounted, and I for the present travel on foot, or on a Highland sheltie, that does not help me much faster forward.'

So saying, he called for a reckoning for the wine, and, throwing down the price of the additional bottle which he had himself introduced, rose as if to take leave of us. My companion made up to him, and, taking him by the button, drew him aside into one of the windows. I could not help overhearing him pressing something — I supposed his company upon the journey — which Mr. Campbell seemed to decline.

'I will pay your charges, sir,' said the traveller, in a tone as if he thought the argument should bear down all opposition.

'It is quite impossible,' said Campbell, somewhat contemptuously ; 'I have business at Rothbury.'

'But I am in no great hurry ; I can ride out of the way, and never miss a day or so for good company.'

'Upon my faith, sir,' said Campbell, 'I cannot order you the service you seem to desiderate. I am,' he added, drawing himself up haughtily, 'travelling on my own private affairs, and if ye will act by my advisement, sir, ye will neither unite yourself with an absolute stranger on the road, nor communicate your line of journey to those who are asking ye no questions about it.' He then extricated his button, not very ceremoniously, from the hold which detained him, and, coming up to me as the company were dispersing, observed, 'Your friend, sir, is too communicative, considering the nature of his trust.'

'That gentleman,' I replied, looking towards the traveller, 'is no friend of mine, but an acquaintance whom I picked up on the road. I know neither his name nor business, and you seem to be deeper in his confidence than I am.'

'I only meant,' he replied, hastily, 'that he seems a thought rash in conferring the honour of his company on those who desire it not.'

'The gentleman,' replied I, 'knows his own affairs best, and I should be sorry to constitute myself a judge of them in any respect.'

Mr. Campbell made no farther observation, but merely wished me a good journey, and the party dispersed for the evening.

Next day I parted company with my timid companion, as I left the great northern road to turn more westerly in the direction of Osbaldistone Manor, my uncle's seat. I cannot tell whether he felt relieved or embarrassed by my departure, considering the dubious light in which he seemed to regard me. For my own part, his tremors ceased to amuse me, and, to say the truth, I was heartily glad to get rid of him.

CHAPTER V

How melts my beating heart, as I behold
Each lovely nymph, our island's boast and pride,
Push on the generous steed, that sweeps along
O'er rough, o'er smooth, nor heeds the steepy hill,
Nor falters in the extended vale below !

The Chase.

I APPROACHED my native north, for such I esteemed it, with that enthusiasm which romantic and wild scenery inspires in the lovers of nature. No longer interrupted by the babble of my companion, I could now remark the difference which the country exhibited from that through which I had hitherto travelled. The streams now more properly deserved the name, for, instead of slumbering stagnant among reeds and willows, they brawled along beneath the shade of natural copsewood ; were now hurried down declivities, and now purled more leisurely, but still in active motion, through little lonely valleys, which, opening on the road from time to time, seemed to invite the traveller to explore their recesses. The Cheviots rose before me in frowning majesty ; not, indeed, with the sublime variety of rock and cliff which characterises mountains of the primary class, but huge, round-headed, and clothed with a dark robe of russet, gaining, by their extent and desolate appearance, an influence upon the imagination, as a desert district possessing a character of its own.

The abode of my fathers, which I was now approaching, was situated in a glen or narrow valley which ran up among those hills. Extensive estates, which once belonged to the family of Osbaldistone, had been long dissipated by the misfortunes or misconduct of my ancestors ; but enough was still attached to the old mansion to give my uncle the title of a man of large property. This he employed (as I was given to understand by some inquiries which I made on the road) in maintaining the prodigal hospitality of a northern squire

of the period, which he deemed essential to his family dignity.

From the summit of an eminence I had already had a distant view of Osbaldistone Hall, a large and antiquated edifice, peeping out from a Druidical grove of huge oaks; and I was directing my course towards it, as straightly and as speedily as the windings of a very indifferent road would permit, when my horse, tired as he was, pricked up his ears at the enlivening notes of a pack of hounds in full cry, cheered by the occasional bursts of a French horn, which in those days was a constant accompaniment to the chase. I made no doubt that the pack was my uncle's, and drew up my horse with the purpose of suffering the hunters to pass without notice, aware that a hunting-field was not the proper scene to introduce myself to a keen sportsman, and determined, when they had passed on, to proceed to the mansion-house at my own pace, and there to await the return of the proprietor from his sport. I paused, therefore, on a rising ground, and, not unmoved by the sense of interest which that species of silvan sport is so much calculated to inspire (although my mind was not at the moment very accessible to impressions of this nature), I expected with some eagerness the appearance of the huntsmen.

The fox, hard run and nearly spent, first made his appearance from the copse which clothed the right-hand side of the valley. His drooping brush, his soiled appearance, and jaded trot proclaimed his fate impending; and the carrion crow, which hovered over him, already considered poor Reynard as soon to be his prey. He crossed the stream which divides the little valley, and was dragging himself up a ravine on the other side of its wild banks, when the headmost hounds, followed by the rest of the pack in full cry, burst from the coppice, followed by the huntsman and three or four riders. The dogs pursued the trace of Reynard with unerring instinct; and the hunters followed with reckless haste, regardless of the broken and difficult nature of the ground. They were tall, stout young men, well mounted, and dressed in green and red, the uniform of a sporting association formed under the auspices of old Sir Hildebrand Osbaldistone. 'My cousins!' thought I, as they swept past me. The next reflection was, what is my relation likely to be among these worthy successors of Nimrod? and how improbable is it that I, knowing little or nothing of rural sports, shall find myself at ease or happy in my uncle's family. A vision that passed me interrupted these reflections.

It was a young lady, the loveliness of whose very striking features was enhanced by the animation of the chase and the glow of the exercise, mounted on a beautiful horse, jet black, unless where he was flecked by spots of the snow-white foam which embossed his bridle. She wore, what was then somewhat unusual, a coat, vest, and hat resembling those of a man, which fashion has since called a riding-habit. The mode had been introduced while I was in France, and was perfectly new to me. Her long black hair streamed on the breeze, having in the hurry of the chase escaped from the ribbon which bound it. Some very broken ground, through which she guided her horse with the most admirable address and presence of mind, retarded her course, and brought her closer to me than any of the other riders had passed. I had, therefore, a full view of her uncommonly fine face and person, to which an inexpressible charm was added by the wild gaiety of the scene and the romance of her singular dress and unexpected appearance. As she passed me, her horse made, in his impetuosity, an irregular movement, just while, coming once more upon open ground, she was again putting him to his speed. It served as an apology for me to ride close up to her, as if to her assistance. There was, however, no cause for alarm; it was not a stumble, nor a false step; and, if it had, the fair Amazon had too much self-possession to have been deranged by it. She thanked my good intentions, however, by a smile, and I felt encouraged to put my horse to the same pace, and to keep in her immediate neighbourhood. The clamour of 'Whoop, dead, dead!' and the corresponding flourish of the French horn, soon announced to us that there was no more occasion for haste, since the chase was at a close. One of the young men whom we had seen approached us, waving the brush of the fox in triumph, as if to upbraid my fair companion.

'I see,' she replied — 'I see; but make no noise about it; if Phoebe,' she said, patting the neck of the beautiful animal on which she rode, 'had not got among the cliffs, you would have had little cause for boasting.'

They met as she spoke, and I observed them both look at me and converse a moment in an undertone, the young lady apparently pressing the sportsman to do something which he declined shyly, and with a sort of sheepish sullenness. She instantly turned her horse's head towards me, saying, 'Well, well, Thornie, if you won't, I must, that's all. Sir,' she continued, addressing me, 'I have been endeavouring to persuade this cultivated young gentleman to make inquiry of you

whether, in the course of your travels in these parts, you have heard anything of a friend of ours, one Mr. Francis Osbaldistone, who has been for some days expected at Osbaldistone Hall?

I was too happy to acknowledge myself to be the party inquired after, and to express my thanks for the obliging inquiries of the young lady.

'In that case, sir,' she rejoined, 'as my kinsman's politeness seems to be still slumbering, you will permit me -- though I suppose it is highly improper -- to stand mistress of ceremonies, and to present to you young Squire Thorncliff Osbaldistone, your cousin, and Die Vernon, who has also the honour to be your accomplished cousin's poor kinswoman.'

There was a mixture of boldness, satire, and simplicity in the manner in which Miss Vernon pronounced these words. My knowledge of life was sufficient to enable me to take up a corresponding tone as I expressed my gratitude to her for her condescension, and my extreme pleasure at having met with them. To say the truth, the compliment was so expressed that the lady might easily appropriate the greater share of it, for Thorncliff seemed an arrant country bumpkin, awkward, shy, and somewhat sulky withal. He shook hands with me, however, and then intimated his intention of leaving me that he might help the huntsman and his brothers to couple up the hounds, a purpose which he rather communicated by way of information to Miss Vernon than as apology to me.

'There he goes,' said the young lady, following him with eyes in which disdain was admirably painted -- 'the prince of grooms, the fighters and blackguard horse-courers. But there is none of them to mend another. Have you read Markham?' said Miss Vernon.

'Read what, ma'am? I do not even remember the author's name.'

'O lud! on what a strand are you wrecked!' replied the young lady. 'A poor forlorn and ignorant stranger, unacquainted with the very Alcoran of the savage tribe whom you are come to reside among. Never to have heard of Markham, the most celebrated author on farriery! Then I fear you are equally a stranger to the more modern names of Gibson and Bartlett?'

'I am indeed, Miss Vernon.'

'And do you not blush to own it?' said Miss Vernon. 'Why, we must forswear your alliance. Then I suppose you can neither give a ball nor a mash nor a horn?'

'I confess I trust all these matters to an ostler or to my groom.'

'Incredible carelessness! And you cannot shoe a horse, or cut his mane and tail; or worm a dog, or crop his ears, or cut his dew-claws; or reclaim a hawk, or give him his casting-stones, or direct his diet when he is sealed; or ——'

'To sum up my insignificance in one word,' replied I, 'I am profoundly ignorant in all these rural accomplishments.'

'Then, in the name of Heaven, Mr. Francis Osbaldistone, what *can* you do?'

'Very little to the purpose, Miss Vernon; something, however, I can pretend to. When my groom has dressed my horse I can ride him, and when my hawk is in the field I can fly him.'

'Can you do this?' said the young lady, putting her horse to a canter.

There was a sort of rude overgrown fence crossed the path before us, with a gate, composed of pieces of wood rough from the forest; I was about to move forward to open it, when Miss Vernon cleared the obstruction at a flying leap. I was bound, in point of honour, to follow, and was in a moment again at her side.

'There are hopes of you yet,' she said. 'I was afraid you had been a very degenerate Osbaldistone. But what on earth brings you to Cub Castle? for so the neighbours have christened this hunting-hall of ours. You might have staid away, I suppose, if you would?'

I felt I was by this time on a very intimate footing with my beautiful apparition, and therefore replied in a confidential undertone — 'Indeed, my dear Miss Vernon, I might have considered it as a sacrifice to be a temporary resident in Osbaldistone Hall, the inmates being such as you describe them; but I am convinced there is one exception that will make amends for all deficiencies.'

'O, you mean Rashleigh?' said Miss Vernon.

'Indeed I do not; I was thinking — forgive me — of some person much nearer me.'

'I suppose it would be proper not to understand your civility? But that is not my way; I don't make a courtesy for it, because I am sitting on horseback. But, seriously, I deserve your exception, for I am the only conversable being about the Hall except the old priest and Rashleigh.'

'And who is Rashleigh, for Heaven's sake?'

'Rashleigh is one who would fain have every one like him

for his own sake. He is Sir Hildebrand's youngest son, about your own age, but not so — not well-looking, in short. But nature has given him a mouthful of common sense, and the priest has added a bushelful of learning; he is what we call a very clever man in this country, where clever men are scarce. Bred to the church, but in no hurry to take orders.'

'To the Catholic Church?'

'The Catholic Church! what Church else?' said the young lady. 'But I forgot, they told me you are a heretic. Is that true, Mr. Osbaldistone?'

'I must not deny the charge.'

'And yet you have been abroad, and in Catholic countries?'

'For nearly four years.'

'You have seen convents?'

'Often; but I have not seen much in them which recommended the Catholic religion.'

'Are not the inhabitants happy?'

'Some are unquestionably so, whom either a profound sense of devotion, or an experience of the persecutions and misfortunes of the world, or a natural apathy of temper, has led into retirement. Those who have adopted a life of seclusion from sudden and overstrained enthusiasm, or in hasty resentment of some disappointment or mortification, are very miserable. The quickness of sensation soon returns, and, like the wild animals in a menagerie, they are restless under confinement, while others muse or fatten in cells of no larger dimensions than theirs.'

'And what,' continued Miss Vernon, 'becomes of those victims who are condemned to a convent by the will of others? What do they resemble especially, what do they resemble if they are born to enjoy life, and feel its blessings?'

'They are like imprisoned singing-birds,' replied I, 'condemned to wear out their lives in confinement, which they try to beguile by the exercise of accomplishments which would have adorned society had they been left at large.'

'I shall be,' returned Miss Vernon — 'that is,' said she, correcting herself, 'I should be rather like the wild hawk, who, barred the free exercise of his soar through heaven, will dash himself to pieces against the bars of his cage. But to return to Rashleigh,' said she in a more lively tone, 'you will think him the pleasantest man you ever saw in your life, Mr. Osbaldistone, that is, for a week at least. If he could find out a blind mistress, never man would be so secure of conquest;

but the eye breaks the spell that enchants the ear. But here we are in the court of the old hall, which looks as wild and old-fashioned as any of its inmates. There is no great toilette kept at Osbaldistone Hall, you must know; but I must take off these things, they are so unpleasantly warm, and the hat hurts my forehead too,' continued the lively girl, taking it off and shaking down a profusion of sable ringlets, which, half laughing, half blushing, she separated with her white slender fingers, in order to clear them away from her beautiful face and piercing hazel eyes. If there was any coquetry in the action, it was well disguised by the careless indifference of her manner. I could not help saying, 'that, judging of the family from what I saw, I should suppose the toilette a very unnecessary care.'

'That's very politely said; though, perhaps, I ought not to understand in what sense it was meant,' replied Miss Vernon; 'but you will see a better apology for a little negligence when you meet the Orsons you are to live amongst, whose forms no toilette could improve. But, as I said before, the old dinner-bell will clang, or rather clank, in a few minutes; it cracked of its own accord on the day of the landing of King Willie, and my uncle, respecting its prophetic talent, would never permit it to be mended. So do you hold my palfrey, like a duteous knight, until I send some more humble squire to relieve you of the charge.'

She threw me the rein as if we had been acquainted from our childhood, jumped from her saddle, tripped across the courtyard, and entered at a side-door, leaving me in admiration of her beauty, and astonished with the over-frankness of her manners, which seemed the more extraordinary at a time when the dictates of politeness, flowing from the court of the *Grand Monarque* Louis XIV., prescribed to the fair sex an unusual severity of decorum. I was left awkwardly enough stationed in the centre of the court of the old hall, mounted on one horse and holding another in my hand.

The building afforded little to interest a stranger, had I been disposed to consider it attentively; the sides of the quadrangle were of various architecture, and with their stone-shafted latticed windows, projecting turrets, and massive architraves, resembled the inside of a convent, or of one of the older and less splendid colleges of Oxford. I called for a domestic, but was for some time totally unattended to; which was the more provoking as I could perceive I was the object of curiosity to

several servants, both male and female, from different parts of the building, who popped out their heads and withdrew them, like rabbits in a warren, before I could make a direct appeal to the attention of any individual. The return of the huntsmen and hounds relieved me from my embarrassment, and with some difficulty I got one clown to relieve me of the charge of the horses, and another stupid boor to guide me to the presence of Sir Hildebrand. This service he performed with much much grace and good-will as a peasant who is compelled to act as guide to a hostile patrol; and in the same manner I was obliged to guard against his deserting me in the labyrinth of low vaulted passages which conducted to 'Stun Hall,' as he called it, where I was to be introduced to the gracious presence of my uncle.

We did, however, at length reach a long vaulted room, floored with stone, where a range of oaken tables, of a weight and size too massive ever to be moved aside, were already covered for dinner. This venerable apartment, which had witnessed the feasts of several generations of the Osbaldistone family, bore also evidence of their success in field-sports. Huge antlers of deer, which might have been trophies of the hunting of Chevy Chase, were ranged around the walls, interspersed with the stuffed skins of badgers, otters, martins, and other animals of the chase. Amidst some remnants of old armour, which had, perhaps, served against the Scotch, hung the more valued weapons of silvan war, cross-bows, guns of various device and construction, nets, fishing-rods, otter-spears, hunting-poles, with many other singular devices and engines for taking or killing game. A few old pictures, dimmed with smoke and stained with March beer, hung on the walls, representing knights and ladies, honoured, doubtless, and renowned in their day; those frowning fearfully from huge bushes of wig and of beard, and these looking delightfully with all their might at the roses which they brandished in their hands.

I had just time to give a glance at these matters when about twelve blue-coated servants burst into the hall with much tumult and talk, each rather employed in directing his comrades than in discharging his own duty. Some brought blocks and billets to the fire, which roared, blazed, and ascended, half in smoke, half in flame, up a huge tunnel, with an opening wide enough to accommodate a stone-seat within its ample vault, and which was fronted, by way of chimney-piece, with a huge piece of heavy architecture, where

the monsters of heraldry, embodied by the art of some Northumbrian chisel, grinned and ramped in red freestone, now japanned by the smoke of centuries. Others of these old-fashioned serving-men bore huge smoking dishes, loaded with substantial fare; others brought in cups, flagons, bottles, yea barrels of liquor. All tramped, kicked, plunged, shouldered, and jostled, doing as little service with as much tumult as could well be imagined. At length, while the dinner was, after various efforts, in the act of being arranged upon the board, 'the clamour much of men and dogs,' the cracking of whips, calculated for the intimidation of the latter, voices loud and high, steps which, impressed by the heavy-heeled boots of the period, clattered like those in the statue of the *Festin de pierre*,¹ announced the arrival of those for whose benefit the preparations were made. The hubbub among the servants rather increased than diminished as this crisis approached: some called to make haste, others to take time, some exhorted to stand out of the way and make room for Sir Hildebrand and the young squires, some to close round the table and be *in* the way, some bawled to open, some to shut, a pair of folding-doors which divided the hall from a sort of gallery, as I afterwards learned, or withdrawing-room, fitted up with black wainscot. Opened the doors were at length, and in rushed curs and men — eight dogs, the domestic chaplain, the village doctor, my six cousins, and my uncle.

¹ Now called *Don Juan*.

CHAPTER VI

The rude hall rocks — they come, they come ;
The din of voices shakes the dome ;
In stalk the various forms, and, drest
In varying morion, varying vest,
All march with haughty step, all proudly shake the crest.

PENROSE.

IF Sir Hildebrand Osbaldistone was in no hurry to greet his nephew, of whose arrival he must have been informed for some time, he had important avocations to allege in excuse. 'Had seen thee sooner, lad,' he exclaimed, after a rough shake of the hand and a hearty welcome to Osbaldistone Hall, 'but had to see the hounds kennelled first. Thou art welcome to the Hall, lad. Here is thy cousin Percie, thy cousin Thornie, and thy cousin John, your cousin Dick, your cousin Wilfred, and — stay, where's Rashleigh — ay, here's Rashleigh — take thy long body aside, Thornie, and let's see thy brother a bit — your cousin Rashleigh. So thy father has thought on the old Hall and old Sir Hildebrand at last ; better late than never. Thou art welcome, lad, and there's enough. Where's my little Die ? Ay, here she comes ; this is my niece Die, my wife's brother's daughter, the prettiest girl in our dales, be the other who she may ; and so now let's to the sirloin.'

To gain some idea of the person who held this language, you must suppose, my dear Tresham, a man aged about sixty, in a hunting suit which had once been richly laced, but whose splendour had been tarnished by many a November and December storm. Sir Hildebrand, notwithstanding the abruptness of his present manner, had at one period of his life known courts and camps ; had held a commission in the army which encamped on Hounslow Heath previous to the Revolution, and, recommended perhaps by his religion, had been knighted about the same period by the unfortunate and ill-advised James II. But the Knight's dreams of further preferment, if he ever

entertained any, had died away at the crisis which drove his patron from the throne, and since that period he had spent a sequestered life upon his native domains. Notwithstanding his rusticity, however, Sir Hildebrand retained much of the exterior of a gentleman, and appeared among his sons as the remains of a Corinthian pillar, defaced and overgrown with moss and lichen, might have looked if contrasted with the rough, unhewn masses of upright stones in Stonhenge or any other Druidical temple. The sons were, indeed, heavy unadorned blocks as the eye would desire to look upon. Tall, stout, and comely, all and each of the five eldest seemed to want alike the Promethean fire of intellect and the exterior grace and manner which, in the polished world, sometimes supply mental deficiency. Their most valuable moral quality seemed to be the good-humour and content which was expressed in their heavy features, and their only pretence to accomplishment was their dexterity in field sports, for which alone they lived. The strong Gyas and the strong Cloanthus are not less distinguished by the poet than the strong Percival, the strong Thorncliff, the strong John, Richard, and Wilfred Osbaldistones were by outward appearance.

But, as if to indemnify herself for a uniformity so uncommon in her productions, Dame Nature had rendered Rashleigh Osbaldistone a striking contrast in person and manner, and, as I afterwards learned, in temper and talents, not only to his brothers, but to most men whom I had hitherto met with. When Percie, Thornie, and Co. had respectively nodded, grinned, and presented their shoulder, rather than their hand, as their father named them to their new kinsman, Rashleigh stepped forward and welcomed me to Osbaldistone Hall with the air and manner of a man of the world. His appearance was not in itself prepossessing. He was of low stature, whereas all his brethren seemed to be descendants of Anak; and, while they were handsomely formed, Rashleigh, though strong in person, was bull-necked and cross-made, and, from some early injury in his youth, had an imperfection in his gait, so much resembling an absolute halt that many alleged that it formed the obstacle to his taking orders; the Church of Rome, as is well known, admitting none to the clerical profession who labours under any personal deformity. Others, however, ascribed this unsightly defect to a mere awkward habit, and contended that it did not amount to a personal disqualification from holy orders.

The features of Rashleigh were such as, having looked upon, we in vain wish to banish from our memory, to which they recur as objects of painful curiosity, although we dwell upon them with a feeling of dislike, and even of disgust. It was not the actual plainness of his face, taken separately from the meaning, which made this strong impression. His features were, indeed, irregular, but they were by no means vulgar; and his keen dark eyes and shaggy eyebrows redeemed his face from the charge of commonplace ugliness. But there was in these eyes an expression of art and design, and, on provocation, a ferocity tempered by caution, which nature had made obvious to the most ordinary physiognomist, perhaps with the same intention that she has given the rattle to the poisonous snake. As if to compensate him for these disadvantages of exterior, Rashleigh Osbaldistone was possessed of a voice the most soft, mellow, and rich in its tones that I ever heard, and was at no loss for language of every sort suited to so fine an organ. His first sentence of welcome was hardly ended ere I internally agreed with Miss Vernon that my new kinsman would make an instant conquest of a mistress whose ears alone were to judge his cause. He was about to place himself beside me at dinner, but Miss Vernon, who, as the only female in the family, arranged all such matters according to her own pleasure, contrived that I should sit betwixt Thorncliff and herself; and it can scarce be doubted that I favoured this more advantageous arrangement.

'I want to speak with you,' she said, 'and I have placed honest Thornie betwixt Rashleigh and you on purpose. He will be like —

Feather-bed 'twixt castle wall
And heavy brunt of cannon ball;

while I, your earliest acquaintance in this intellectual family, ask of you how you like us all?'

'A very comprehensive question, Miss Vernon, considering how short while I have been at Osbaldistone Hall.'

'O, the philosophy of our family lies on the surface: there are minute shades distinguishing the individuals which require the eye of an intelligent observer; but the species, as naturalists, I believe, call it, may be distinguished and characterised at once.'

'My five elder cousins, then, are, I presume, of pretty nearly the same character.'

'Yes, they form a happy compound of sot, gamekeeper, bully,

horse-jockey, and fool ; but, as they say there cannot be found two leaves on the same tree exactly alike, so these happy ingredients, being mingled in somewhat various proportions in each individual, make an agreeable variety for those who like to study character.'

'Give me a sketch, if you please, Miss Vernon.'

'You shall have them all in a family-piece, at full length ; the favour is too easily granted to be refused. Percie, the son and heir, has more of the sot than of the gamekeeper, bully, horse-jockey, or fool. My precious Thornie is more of the bully than the sot, gamekeeper, jockey, or fool. John, who sleeps whole weeks amongst the hills, has most of the gamekeeper. The jockey is powerful with Dickon, who rides two hundred miles by day and night to be bought and sold at a horse-race. And the fool predominates so much over Wilfred's other qualities that he may be termed a fool positive.'

'A goodly collection, Miss Vernon, and the individual varieties belong to a most interesting species. But is there no room on the canvas for Sir Hildebrand ?'

'I love my uncle,' was her reply ; 'I owe him some kindness — such it was meant for at least — and I will leave you to draw his picture yourself, when you know him better.'

'Come,' thought I to myself, 'I am glad there is some forbearance. After all, who would have looked for such bitter satire from a creature so young and so exquisitely beautiful ?'

'You are thinking of me,' she said, bending her dark eyes on me, as if she meant to pierce through my very soul.

'I certainly was,' I replied, with some embarrassment at the determined suddenness of the question ; and then, endeavouring to give a complimentary turn to my frank avowal : 'How is it possible I should think of anything else, seated as I have the happiness to be ?'

She smiled with such an expression of concentrated haughtiness as she alone could have thrown into her countenance. 'I must inform you at once, Mr. Osbaldistone, that compliments are entirely lost upon me ; do not, therefore, throw away your pretty sayings : they serve fine gentlemen who travel in the country instead of the toys, beads, and bracelets which navigators carry to propitiate the savage inhabitants of newly discovered lands. Do not exhaust your stock in trade ; you will find natives in Northumberland to whom your fine things will recommend you ; on me they would be utterly thrown away, for I happen to know their real value.'

I was silenced and confounded.

'You remind me at this moment,' said the young lady, resuming her lively and indifferent manner, 'of the fairy tale, where the man finds all the money which he had carried to market suddenly changed into pieces of slate. I have cried down and ruined your whole stock of complimentary discourse by one unlucky observation. But come, never mind it. You are belied, Mr. Osbaldistone, unless you have much better conversation than these *fideurs* which every gentleman with a toupet thinks himself obliged to recite to an unfortunate girl, merely because she is dressed in silk and gauze, while he wears superfine cloth with embroidery. Your natural paces, as any of my five cousins might say, are far preferable to your complimentary amble. Endeavour to forget my unlucky sex; call me Tom Vernon, if you have a mind, but speak to me as you would to a friend and companion; you have no idea how much I shall like you.'

'That would be a bribe indeed,' returned I.

'Again!' replied Miss Vernon, holding up her finger; 'I told you I would not bear the shadow of a compliment. And now, when you have pledged my uncle, who threatens you with what he calls a brimmer, I will tell you what you think of me.'

The bumper being pledged by me as a dutiful nephew, and some other general intercourse of the table having taken place, the continued and business-like clang of knives and forks, and the devotion of cousin Thorncliff on my right hand and cousin Dickon, who sate on Miss Vernon's left, to the huge quantities of meat with which they heaped their plates, made them serve as two occasional partitions, separating us from the rest of the company, and leaving us to our *tête-à-tête*. 'And now,' said I, 'give me leave to ask you frankly, Miss Vernon, what you suppose I am thinking of you? I could tell you what I really *do* think, but you have interdicted praise.'

'I do not want your assistance. I am conjurer enough to tell your thoughts without it. You need not open the case-ment of your bosom; I see through it. You think me a strange bold girl, half coquette, half romp; desirous of attracting attention by the freedom of her manners and loudness of her conversation, because she is ignorant of what the *Spectator* calls the softer graces of the sex; and perhaps you think I have some particular plan of storming you into admiration. I should be sorry to shock your self-opinion, but you were never more mistaken. All the confidence I have reposed in you I would have

given as readily to your father, if I thought he could have understood me. I am in this happy family as much secluded from intelligent listeners as Sancho in the Sierra Morena, and when opportunity offers I must speak or die. I assure you I would not have told you a word of all this curious intelligence had I cared a pin who knew it or knew it not.'

'It is very cruel in you, Miss Vernon, to take away all particular marks of favour from your communications, but I must receive them on your own terms. You have not included Mr. Rashleigh Osbaldistone in your domestic sketches.'

She shrunk, I thought, at this remark, and hastily answered in a much lower tone, 'Not a word of Rashleigh! His ears are so acute when his selfishness is interested that the sounds would reach him even through the mass of Thorncliff's person, stuffed as it is with beef, venison-pasty, and pudding.'

'Yes,' I replied: 'but, peeping past the living screen which divides us before I put the question, I perceived that Mr. Rashleigh's chair was empty; he has left the table.'

'I would not have you be too sure of that,' Miss Vernon replied. 'Take my advice, and when you speak of Rashleigh get up to the top of Otterscope Hill, where you can see for twenty miles round you in every direction, stand on the very peak and speak in whispers; and, after all, don't be too sure that the bird of the air will not carry the matter. Rashleigh has been my tutor for four years; we are mutually tired of each other, and we shall heartily rejoice at our approaching separation.'

'Mr. Rashleigh leaves Osbaldistone Hall, then?'

'Yes, in a few days; did you not know that? Your father must keep his resolutions much more secret than Sir Hildebrand. Why, when my uncle was informed that you were to be his guest for some time, and that your father desired to have one of his hopeful sons to fill up the lucrative situation in his counting-house which was vacant by your obstinacy, Mr. Francis, the good knight, held a *cour plénière* of all his family, including the butler, housekeeper, and gamekeeper. This reverend assembly of the peers and household officers of Osbaldistone Hall was not convoked, as you may suppose, to elect your substitute, because, as Rashleigh alone possessed more arithmetic than was necessary to calculate the odds on a fighting-cock, none but he could be supposed qualified for the situation. But some solemn sanction was necessary for transforming Rashleigh's destination from starving as a Catholic priest to

thriving as a wealthy banker ; and it was not without some reluctance that the acquiescence of the assembly was obtained to such an act of degradation.'

'I can conceive the scruples ; but how were they got over ?'

'By the general wish, I believe, to get Rashleigh out of the house,' replied Miss Vernon. 'Although youngest of the family, he has somehow or other got the entire management of all the others ; and every one is sensible of the subjection, though they cannot shake it off. If any one opposes him he is sure to rue having done so before the year goes about ; and if you do him a very important service you may rue it still more.'

'At that rate,' answered I, smiling, 'I should look about me ; for I have been the cause, however unintentionally, of his change of situation.'

'Yes ! and whether he regards it as an advantage or disadvantage, he will owe you a grudge for it. But here come cheese, radishes, and a bumper to church and king, the hint for chaplains and ladies to disappear ; and I, the sole representative of womanhood at Osbaldistone Hall, retreat as in duty bound.'

She vanished as she spoke, leaving me in astonishment at the mingled character of shrewdness, audacity, and frankness which her conversation displayed. I despair conveying to you the least idea of her manner, although I have, as nearly as I can remember, imitated her language. In fact, there was a mixture of untaught simplicity, as well as native shrewdness and haughty boldness, in her manner, and all were modified and recommended by the play of the most beautiful features I had ever beheld. It is not to be thought that, however strange and uncommon I might think her liberal and unreserved communications, a young man of two-and-twenty was likely to be severely critical on a beautiful girl of eighteen for not observing a proper distance towards him. On the contrary, I was equally diverted and flattered by Miss Vernon's confidence ; and that notwithstanding her declaration of its being conferred on me solely because I was the first auditor who occurred of intelligence enough to comprehend it. With the presumption of my age, certainly not diminished by my residence in France, I imagined that well-formed features and a handsome person, both which I conceived myself to possess, were not unsuitable qualifications for the confidant of a young beauty. My vanity thus enlisted in Miss Vernon's behalf, I was far from judging her with severity merely for a frankness which, I supposed, was in some degree justified by my own personal merit ; and

the feelings of partiality which her beauty and the singularity of her situation were of themselves calculated to excite, were enhanced by my opinion of her penetration and judgment in her choice of a friend.

After Miss Vernon quitted the apartment, the bottle circulated, or rather flew, around the table in unceasing revolution. My foreign education had given me a distaste to intemperance, then and yet too common a vice among my countrymen. The conversation which seasoned such orgies was as little to my taste, and, if anything could render it more disgusting, it was the relationship of the company. I therefore seized a lucky opportunity, and made my escape through a side-door, leading I knew not whither, rather than endure any longer the sight of father and sons practising the same degrading intemperance, and holding the same coarse and disgusting conversation. I was pursued, of course, as I had expected, to be reclaimed by force as a deserter from the shrine of Bacchus. When I heard the whoop and halloo, and the tramp of the heavy boots of my pursuers on the winding stair which I was descending, I plainly foresaw I should be overtaken unless I could get into the open air. I therefore threw open a casement in the staircase which looked into an old-fashioned garden; and, as the height did not exceed six feet, I jumped out without hesitation, and soon heard, far behind, the 'hey whoop! stole away! stole away!' of my baffled pursuers. I ran down one alley, walked fast up another; and then, conceiving myself out of all danger of pursuit, I slackened my pace into a quiet stroll, enjoying the cool air which the heat of the wine I had been obliged to swallow, as well as that of my rapid retreat, rendered doubly grateful.

As I sauntered on, I found the gardener hard at his evening employment, and saluted him, as I paused to look at his work. 'Good even, my friend.'

'Gude e'en — gude e'en t'ye,' answered the man, without looking up, and in a tone which at once indicated his northern extraction.

'Fine weather for your work, my friend.'

'It's no that muckle to be compleened o', ' answered the man, with that limited degree of praise which gardeners and farmers usually bestow on the very best weather. Then raising his head, as if to see who spoke to him, he touched his Scotch bonnet with an air of respect, as he observed, 'Eh, gude safe us! it's a sight for sair een to see a gold-laced jeistiecor in the Ha' garden sae late at e'en.'

'A gold-laced what, my good friend?'

'Ou, a jeistiecor — that's a jacket like your ain there. They hae other things to do wi' them up yonder, unbuttoning them to make room for the beef and the bag-puddings and the claret-wine, nae doubt; that's the ordinary for evening lecture on this side the Border.'

'There's no such plenty of good cheer in your country, my good friend,' I replied, 'as to tempt you to sit so late at it.'

'Hout, sir, ye ken little about Scotland; it's no for want of gude vivers — the best of fish, flesh, and fowl hae we, by syboes, ingans, turneeps, and other garden fruit. But we hae mense and discretion, and are moderate of our mouths; but here, frae the kitchen to the ha', it's fill and fetch mair, frae the tae end of the four-and-twenty till the tother. Even their fast days — they ca' it fasting when they hae the best o' sea-fish frae Hartlepool and Sunderland by land carriage, forbye trouts, grilises, salmon, and a' the lave o't, and so they make their very fasting a kind of luxury and abomination; and then the awfu' masses and matins of the pair deceived souls; but I shouldna speak about them, for your honour will be a Roman, I'se warrant, like the lave.'

'Not I, my friend; I was bred an English presbyterian or dissenter.'

'The right hand of fellowship to your honour then,' quoth the gardener, with as much alacrity as his hard features were capable of expressing, and, as if to show that his good-will did not rest on words, he plucked forth a huge horn snuff-box, or mull, as he called it, and proffered me a pinch with a most fraternal grin.

Having accepted his courtesy, I asked him if he had been long a domestic at Osbaldistone Hall.

'I have been fighting with wild beasts at Ephesus,' said he, looking towards the building, 'for the best part of these four-and-twenty years, as sure as my name's Andrew Fairservice.'

'But, my excellent friend Andrew Fairservice, if your religion and your temperance are so much offended by Roman rituals and southern hospitality, it seems to me that you must have been putting yourself to an unnecessary penance all this while, and that you might have found a service where they eat less and are more orthodox in their worship. I daresay it cannot be want of skill which prevented your being placed more to your satisfaction.'

'It disna become me to speak to the point of my qualifica-

tions,' said Andrew, looking round him with great complacency; 'but nae doubt I should understand my trade of horticulture, seeing I was bred in the parish of Dreepdailly, where they raise lang-kale under glass, and force the early nettles for their spring kale. And, to speak truth, I hae been flitting every term these four-and-twenty years; but when the time comes, there's aye something to saw that I would like to see sawn, or something to maw that I would like to see mawn, or something to ripe that I would like to see ripen, and sae I e'en daiker on wi' the family frae year's end to year's end. And I wad say for certain that I am gaun to quit at Cannlemas, only I was just as positive on it twenty years syne, and I find mysell still turning up the moulds here, for a' that. Forbye that, to tell your honour the even-down truth, there's nae better place ever offered to Andrew. But if your honour wad wush me to ony place where I wad hear pure doctrine, and hae a free cow's grass, and a cot, and a yard, and mair than ten pounds of annual fee, and where there's nae ledly about the town to count the apples, I'se hold mysell muckle indebted t' ye.'

'Bravo, Andrew; I perceive you'll lose no preferment for want of asking patronage.'

'I canna see what for I should,' replied Andrew; 'it's no a generation to wait till ane's worth's discovered, I trow.'

'But you are no friend, I observe, to the ladies.'

'Na, by my troth, I keep up the first gardener's quarrel to them. They're fasheous bargains—aye crying for apricocks, pears, plums, and apples, summer and winter, without distinction o' seasons; but we hae nae slices o' the spare rib here, be praised for 't! except auld Martha, and she's weel eneugh pleased wi' the freedom o' the berry-bushes to her sister's weans, when they come to drink tea in a holiday in the house-keeper's room, and wi' a wheen codlings now and then for her ain private supper.'

'You forget your young mistress.'

'What mistress do I forget? whae's that?'

'Your young mistress, Miss Vernon.'

'What! the lassie Vernon? She's nae mistress o' mine, man. I wish she was her ain mistress; and I wish she mayna be some other body's mistress or it's lang. She's a wild slip that.'

'Indeed!' said I, more interested than I cared to own to myself or to show to the fellow; 'why, Andrew, you know all the secrets of this family.'

'If I ken them, I can keep them,' said Andrew; 'they winna work in my wame like barn in a barrel, I'se warrant ye. Miss Die is — but it's neither beef nor brose o' mine.'

And he began to dig with a great semblance of assiduity.

'What is Miss Vernon, Andrew? I am a friend of the family, and should like to know.'

'Other than a gude ane, I'm fearing,' said Andrew, closing one eye hard, and shaking his head with a grave and mysterious look — 'something glee'd; your honour understands me?'

'I cannot say I do,' said I, 'Andrew; but I should like to hear you explain yourself,' and therewithal I slipped a crown-piece into Andrew's horn-hard hand. The touch of the silver made him grin a ghastly smile, as he nodded slowly and thrust it into his breeches pocket; and then, like a man who well understood that there was value to be returned, stood up and rested his arms on his spade, with his features composed into the most important gravity, as for some serious communication.

'Ye maun ken, then, young gentleman, since it imports you to know, that Miss Vernon is —'

Here breaking off, he sucked in both his cheeks, till his lantern jaws and long chin assumed the appearance of a pair of nut-crackers; winked hard once more, frowned, shook his head, and seemed to think his physiognomy had completed the information which his tongue had not fully told.

'Good God!' said I, 'so young, so beautiful, so early lost!'

'Troth, ye may say sae: she's in a manner lost, body and saul; forby being a Papist, I'se uphaud her for —' and his northern caution prevailed and he was again silent.

'For what, sir?' said I, sternly. 'I insist on knowing the plain meaning of all this.'

'Ou, just for the bitterest Jacobite in the haill shire.'

'Pshaw! a Jacobite? is that all?'

Andrew looked at me with some astonishment at hearing his information treated so lightly; and then muttering, 'Aweel, it's the warst thing I ken aboot the lassie, howsoe'er,' he resumed his spade, like the King of the Vandals in Marмонтel's late novel.

CHAPTER VII

Bardolph. The sheriff, with a monstrous watch, is at the door.

Henry IV., First Part.

I FOUND out with some difficulty the apartment which was destined for my accommodation ; and, having secured myself the necessary good-will and attention from my uncle's domestics, by using the means they were most capable of comprehending, I secluded myself there for the remainder of the evening, conjecturing, from the fair way in which I had left my new relatives, as well as from the distant noise which continued to echo from the stone-hall, as their banqueting-room was called, that they were not likely to be fitting company for a sober man.

What could my father mean by sending me to be an inmate in this strange family ? was my first and most natural reflection. My uncle, it was plain, received me as one who was to make some stay with him, and his rude hospitality rendered him as indifferent as King Hal to the number of those who fed at his cost. But it was plain my presence or absence would be of as little importance in his eyes as that of one of his blue-coated serving-men. My cousins were mere cubs, in whose company I might, if I liked it, unlearn whatever decent manners or elegant accomplishments I had acquired, but where I could attain no information beyond what regarded worming dogs, rowelling horses, and following foxes. I could only imagine one reason, which was probably the true one. My father considered the life which was led at Osbaldistone Hall as the natural and inevitable pursuits of all country gentlemen, and he was desirous, by giving me an opportunity of seeing that with which he knew I should be disgusted, to reconcile me, if possible, to take an active share in his own business. In the meantime he would take Rashleigh Osbaldistone into the counting-house. But he had an hundred modes of providing for him, and that advantageously, whenever he chose to get rid of him. So that,

although I did feel a certain qualm of conscience at having been the means of introducing R. Chleigh, being such as he was described by Miss Vernon, into my father's business, perhaps into his confidence, I subdued it by the reflection that my father was complete master of his own affairs, a man not to be imposed upon or influenced by any one, and that all I knew to the young gentleman's prejudice was through the medium of a singular and giddy girl, whose communications were made with an injudicious frankness which might warrant me in supposing her conclusions had been hastily or inaccurately formed. Then my mind naturally turned to Miss Vernon herself, her extreme beauty; her very peculiar situation, relying solely upon her reflections and her own spirit for guidance and protection; and her whole character offering that variety and spirit which piques our curiosity and engages our attention in spite of ourselves. I had sense enough to consider the neighbourhood of this singular young lady, and the chance of our being thrown into very close and frequent intercourse, as adding to the dangers, while it relieved the dullness, of Osbaldistone Hall; but I could not, with the fullest exertion of my prudence, prevail upon myself to regret excessively this new and particular hazard to which I was to be exposed. This scruple I also settled as young men settle most difficulties of the kind: I would be very cautious, always on my guard, consider Miss Vernon rather as a companion than an intimate; and all would do well enough. With these reflections I fell asleep, Miss Vernon, of course, forming the last subject of my contemplation.

Whether I dreamed of her or not I cannot satisfy you, for I was tired and slept soundly. But she was the first person I thought of in the morning, when waked at dawn by the cheerful notes of the hunting-horn. To start up and direct my horse to be saddled was my first movement; and in a few minutes I was in the courtyard, where men, dogs, and horses were in full preparation. My uncle, who, perhaps, was not entitled to expect a very alert sportsman in his nephew, bred as he had been in foreign parts, seemed rather surprised to see me, and I thought his morning salutation wanted something of the hearty and hospitable tone which distinguished his first welcome. 'Art there, lad? ay, youth's aye rathe; but look to thyself — mind the old song, lad —

He that gallops his horse on Blackstone edge
May chance to catch a fall.'

I believe there are few young men, and those very sturdy moralists, who would not rather be taxed with some moral peccadillo than with want of knowledge in horsemanship. As I was by no means deficient either in skill or courage, I resented my uncle's insinuation accordingly, and assured him he would find me up with the hounds.

'I doubtna, lad,' was his reply; 'thou'rt a rank rider, I'se warrant thee; but take heed. Thy father sent thee here to me to be bitted, and I doubt I must ride thee on the curb, or we'll hae some one to ride thee on the halter, if I takena the better heed.'

As this speech was totally unintelligible to me; as, besides, it did not seem to be delivered for my use or benefit, but was spoken as it were aside, and as if expressing aloud something which was passing through the mind of my much-honoured uncle, I concluded it must either refer to my desertion of the bottle on the preceding evening, or that my uncle's morning hours being a little discomposed by the revels of the night before, his temper had suffered in proportion. I only made the passing reflection, that if he played the ungracious landlord I would remain the shorter while his guest, and then hastened to salute Miss Vernon, who advanced cordially to meet me. Some show of greeting also passed between my cousins and me; but as I saw them maliciously bent upon criticising my dress and accoutrements, from the cap to the stirrup-irons, and sneering at whatever had a new or foreign appearance, I exempted myself from the task of paying them much attention; and assuming, in requital of their grins and whispers, an air of the utmost indifference and contempt, I attached myself to Miss Vernon as the only person in the party whom I could regard as a suitable companion. By her side, therefore, we sallied forth to the destined cover, which was a dingle or copse on the side of an extensive common. As we rode thither, I observed to Diana that I did not see my cousin Rashleigh in the field; to which she replied, 'O no, he's a mighty hunter, but it's after the fashion of Nimrod, and his game is man.'

The dogs now brushed into the cover, with the appropriate encouragement from the hunters: all was business, bustle, and activity. My cousins were soon too much interested in the business of the morning to take any further notice of me, unless that I overheard Dickon the horse-jockey, whisper to Wilfred the fool, 'Look thou, an our French cousin be nat off a' first burst.'

To which Wilfred answered, 'Like enow, for he has a queer outlandish binding on 's castor.'

Thorncliff, however, who in his rude way seemed not absolutely insensible to the beauty of his kinswoman, appeared determined to keep us company more closely than his brothers, perhaps to watch what passed betwixt Miss Vernon and me, perhaps to enjoy my expected mishaps in the chase. In the last particular he was disappointed. After beating in vain for the greater part of the morning, a fox was at length found, who led us a chase of two hours, in the course of which, notwithstanding the ill-omened French binding upon my hat, I sustained my character as a horseman to the admiration of my uncle and Miss Vernon, and the secret disappointment of those who expected me to disgrace it. Reynard, however, proved too wily for his pursuers, and the hounds were at fault. I could at this time observe in Miss Vernon's manner an impatience of the close attendance which we received from Thorncliff Osbaldistone; and, as that active-spirited young lady never hesitated at taking the readiest means to gratify any wish of the moment, she said to him, in a tone of reproach — 'I wonder, Thornie, what keeps you dangling at my horse's crupper all this morning, when you know the earths above Woolverton mill are not stopt.'

'I know no such an thing then, Miss Die, for the miller swore himself as black as night that he stopt them at twelve o'clock, midnight that was.'

'O fie upon you, Thornie, would you trust to a miller's word? and these earths, too, where we lost the fox three times this season, and you on your grey mare that can gallop there and back in ten minutes!'

'Well, Miss Die, I'll go to Woolverton then, and if the earths are not stopt I'll raddle Dick the miller's bones for him.'

'Do, my dear Thornie, horsewhip the rascal to purpose; via — fly away, and about it' — Thorncliff went off at the gallop — 'or get horsewhipt yourself, which will serve my purpose just as well. I must teach them all discipline and obedience to the word of command. I am raising a regiment, you must know. Thornie shall be my sergeant-major, Dickon my riding-master, and Wilfred, with his deep dub-a-dub tones, that speak but three syllables at a time, my kettle-drummer.'

'And Rashleigh?'

'Rashleigh shall be my scout-master.'

'And will you find no employment for me, most lovely colonel?'

'You shall have the choice of being paymaster or plunder-master to the corps. But see how the dogs puzzle about there. Come, Mr. Frank, the scent's cold; they won't recover it there this while; follow me, I have a view to show you.'

And in fact she cantered up to the top of a gentle hill, commanding an extensive prospect. Casting her eyes around, to see that no one was near us, she drew up her horse beneath a few birch-trees, which screened us from the rest of the hunting-field. 'Do you see yon peaked, brown, heathy hill, having something like a whitish speck upon the side?'

'Terminating that long ridge of broken moorish uplands? I see it distinctly.'

'That whitish speck is a rock called Hawkesmore Crag, and Hawkesmore Crag is in Scotland.'

'Indeed? I did not think we had been so near Scotland.'

'It is so, I assure you, and your horse will carry you there in two hours.'

'I shall hardly give him the trouble; why, the distance must be eighteen miles as the crow flies.'

'You may have my mare, if you think her less blown. I say, that in two hours you may be in Scotland.'

'And I say, that I have so little desire to be there that if my horse's head were over the Border, I would not give his tail the trouble of following. What should I do in Scotland?'

'Provide for your safety, if I must speak plainly. Do you understand me now, Mr. Frank?'

'Not a whit; you are more and more oracular.'

'Then, on my word, you either mistrust me most unjustly, and are a better dissembler than Rashleigh Osbaldistone himself, or you know nothing of what is imputed to you; and then no wonder you stare at me in that grave manner, which I can scarce see without laughing.'

'Upon my word of honour, Miss Vernon,' said I, with an impatient feeling of her childish disposition to mirth, 'I have not the most distant conception of what you mean. I am happy to afford you any subject of amusement, but I am quite ignorant in what it consists.'

'Nay, there's no sound jest after all,' said the young lady, composing herself, 'only one looks so very ridiculous when he is fairly perplexed; but the matter is serious enough. Do you know one Moray, or Morris, or some such name?'

'Not that I can at present recollect.'

'Think a moment. Did you not lately travel with somebody of such a name?'

'The only man with whom I travelled for any length of time was a fellow whose soul seemed to lie in his portmanteau.'

'Then it was like the soul of the licentiate Pedro Garcias, which lay among the ducats in his leathern purse. That man has been robbed, and he has lodged an information against you, as connected with the violence done to him.'

'You jest, Miss Vernon?'

'I do not, I assure you; the thing is an absolute fact.'

'And do you,' said I, with strong indignation, which I did not attempt to suppress — 'do you suppose me capable of meriting such a charge?'

'You would call me out for it, I suppose, had I the advantage of being a man. You may do so as it is if you like it; I can shoot flying as well as leap a five-barred gate.'

'And are colonel of a regiment of horse besides,' replied I, reflecting how idle it was to be angry with her. 'But do explain the present jest to me!'

'There's no jest whatever,' said Diana; 'you are accused of robbing this man, and my uncle believes it as well as I did.'

'Upon my honour, I am greatly obliged to my friends for their good opinion!'

'Now do not, if you can help it, snort and stare and snuff the wind, and look so exceedingly like a startled horse. There's no such offence as you suppose; you are not charged with any petty larceny or vulgar felony, by no means. This fellow was carrying money from government, both specie and bills to pay the troops in the north; and it is said he has been also robbed of some despatches of great consequence.'

'And so it is high treason, then, and not simple robbery, of which I am accused?'

'Certainly; which, you know, has been in all ages accounted the crime of a gentleman. You will find plenty in this country, and one not far from your elbow, who think it a merit to distress the Hanoverian government by every means possible.'

'Neither my politics nor my morals, Miss Vernon, are of a description so accommodating.'

'I really begin to believe that you are a Presbyterian and Hanoverian in good earnest. But what do you propose to do?'

'Instantly to refute this atrocious calumny. Before whom, I asked, 'was this extraordinary accusation laid?'

'Before old Squire Inglewood, who had sufficient unwilling-

ness to receive it. He sent tidings to my uncle, I suppose, that he might smuggle you away into Scotland, out of reach of the warrant. But my uncle is sensible that his religion and old predilections render him obnoxious to government, and that, were he caught playing booty, he would be disarmed, and probably dismounted — which would be the worse evil of the two — as a Jacobite, Papist, and suspected person.’¹

‘I can conceive that, sooner than lose his hunters, he would give up his nephew.’

‘His nephew, nieces, sons, daughters if he had them, and whole generation,’ said Diana; ‘therefore trust not to him, even for a single moment, but make the best of your way before they can serve the warrant.’

‘That I shall certainly do; but it shall be to the house of this Squire Inglewood. Which way does it lie?’

‘About five miles off, in the low ground behind yonder plantations; you may see the tower of the clock-house.’

‘I will be there in a few minutes,’ said I, putting my horse in motion.

‘And I will go with you and show you the way,’ said Diana, putting her palfrey also to the trot.

‘Do not think of it, Miss Vernon,’ I replied. ‘It is not — permit me the freedom of a friend — it is not proper, scarcely even delicate, in you to go with me on such an errand as I am now upon.’

‘I understand your meaning,’ said Miss Vernon, a slight blush crossing her haughty brow; ‘it is plainly spoken,’ and after a moment’s pause she added, ‘and I believe kindly meant.’

‘It is indeed, Miss Vernon; can you think me insensible of the interest you show me, or ungrateful for it?’ said I, with even more earnestness than I could have wished to express. ‘Yours is meant for true kindness, shown best at the hour of need. But I must not, for your own sake, for the chance of misconstruction, suffer you to pursue the dictates of your generosity; this is so public an occasion, it is almost like venturing into an open court of justice.’

‘And if it were not almost, but altogether entering into an open court of justice, do you think I would not go there if I thought it right, and wished to protect a friend? You have no one to stand by you, you are a stranger; and here, in the outskirts of the kingdom, country justices do odd things. My uncle has no desire to embroil himself in your affair; Rashleigh

¹ See *Horses of the Catholics*. Note 1.

is absent, and, were he here, there is no knowing which side he might take; the rest are all more stupid and brutal one than another. I will go with you, and I do not fear being able to serve you. I am no fine lady, to be terrified to death with law books, hard words, or big wigs.'

'But, my dear Miss Vernon——'

'But, my dear Mr. Francis, be patient and quiet, and let me take my own way; for when I take the bit between my teeth there is no bridle will stop me.'

Flattered with the interest so lovely a creature seemed to take in my fate, yet vexed at the ridiculous appearance I should make by carrying a girl of eighteen along with me as an advocate, and seriously concerned for the misconstruction to which her motives might be exposed, I endeavoured to combat her resolution to accompany me to Squire Inglewood's. The self-willed girl told me roundly that my dissuasions were absolutely in vain; that she was a true Vernon, whom no consideration, not even that of being able to do but little to assist him, should induce to abandon a friend in distress; and that all I could say on the subject might be very well for pretty, well-educated, well-behaved misses from a town boarding-school, but did not apply to her, who was accustomed to mind nobody's opinion but her own.

While she spoke thus, we were advancing hastily towards Inglewood Place, while, as if to divert me from the task of farther remonstrance, she drew a ludicrous picture of the magistrate and his clerk. Inglewood was, according to her description, a white-washed Jacobite, that is, one who, having been long a nonjuror, like most of the other gentlemen of the country, had lately qualified himself to act as a justice by taking the oaths to government. 'He had done so,' she said, 'in compliance with the urgent request of most of his brother squires, who saw with regret that the palladium of silvan sport, the game-laws, were likely to fall into disuse for want of a magistrate who would enforce them; the nearest acting justice being the Mayor of Newcastle, and he, as being rather inclined to the consumption of the game when properly dressed than to its preservation when alive, was more partial, of course, to the cause of the poacher than of the sportsman. Resolving, therefore, that it was expedient some one of their number should sacrifice the scruples of Jacobitical loyalty to the good of the community, the Northumbrian country gentlemen imposed the duty on Inglewood, who, being very inert in

most of his feelings and sentiments, might, they thought, comply with any political creed without much repugnance. Having thus procured the body of justice, they proceeded, continued Miss Vernon, 'to attach to it a clerk, by way of soul, to direct and animate its movements. Accordingly, they got a sharp Newcastle attorney called Jobson, who, to vary my metaphor, finds it a good thing enough to retail justice at the sign of Squire Inglewood, and, as his own emoluments depend on the quantity of business which he transacts, he hooks in his principal for a great deal more employment in the justice line than the honest squire had ever bargained for; so that no apple-wife within the circuit of ten miles can settle her account with a costermonger without an audience of the reluctant Justice and his alert clerk, Mr. Joseph Jobson. But the most ridiculous scenes occur when affairs come before him, like our business of to-day, having any colouring of politics. Mr. Joseph Jobson — for which, no doubt, he has his own very sufficient reasons — is a prodigious zealot for the Protestant religion, and a great friend to the present establishment in church and state. Now his principal, retaining a sort of instinctive attachment to the opinions which he professed openly until he relaxed his political creed, with the patriotic view of enforcing the law against unauthorised destroyers of black-game, grouse, partridges, and hares, is peculiarly embarrassed when the zeal of his assistant involves him in judicial proceedings connected with his earlier faith; and, instead of seconding his zeal, he seldom fails to oppose to it a double dose of indolence and lack of exertion. And this inactivity does not by any means arise from actual stupidity. On the contrary, for one whose principal delight is in eating and drinking, he is an alert, joyous, and lively old soul, which makes his assumed dulness the more diverting. So you may see Jobson on such occasions, like a bit of a broken-down blood-tit condemned to drag an overloaded cart, puffing, strutting, and spluttering to get the Justice put in motion, while, though the wheels groan, creak, and revolve slowly, the great and preponderating weight of the vehicle fairly frustrates the efforts of the willing quadruped, and prevents its being brought into a state of actual progression. Nay more, the unfortunate pony, I understand, has been heard to complain that this same car of justice, which he finds it so hard to put in motion on some occasions, can on others run fast enough down hill of its own accord, dragging his reluctant self back-

wards along with it, when anything can be done of service to Squire Inglewood's quondam friends. And then Mr. Jobson talks big about reporting his principal to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, if it were not for his particular regard and friendship for Mr. Inglewood and his family.'

As Miss Vernon concluded this whimsical description, we found ourselves in front of Inglewood Place, a handsome though old-fashioned building, which showed the consequence of the family.

CHAPTER VIII

'Sir,' quoth the Lawyer, 'not to flatter ye,
You have as good and fair a battery
As heart could wish, and need not shame
The proudest man alive to claim.'

BUTLER.

OUR horses were taken by a servant in Sir Hildebrand's livery, whom we found in the courtyard, and we entered the house. In the entrance hall I was somewhat surprised, and my fair companion still more so, when we met Rashleigh Osbaldistone, who could not help showing equal wonder at our *rencontre*.

'Rashleigh,' said Miss Vernon, without giving him time to ask any question, 'you have heard of Mr. Francis Osbaldistone's affair, and you have been talking to the Justice about it?'

'Certainly,' said Rashleigh, composedly, 'it has been my business here. I have been endeavouring,' he said, with a bow to me, 'to render my cousin what service I can. But I am sorry to meet him here.'

'As a friend and relation, Mr. Osbaldistone, you ought to have been sorry to have met me anywhere else, at a time when the charge of my reputation required me to be on this spot as soon as possible.'

'True; but, judging from what my father said, I should have supposed a short retreat into Scotland, just till matters should be smoothed over in a quiet way ——'

I answered with warmth, 'That I had no prudential measures to observe, and desired to have nothing smoothed over; on the contrary, I was come to inquire into a rascally calumny, which I was determined to probe to the bottom.'

'Mr. Francis Osbaldistone is an innocent man, Rashleigh,' said Miss Vernon, 'and he demands an investigation of the charge against him, and I intend to support him in it.'

'You do, my pretty cousin? I should think, now, Mr.

Francis Osbaldistone was likely to be as effectually, and rather more delicately, supported by my presence than by yours.'

'O certainly; but two heads are better than one, you know.'

'Especially such a head as yours, my pretty Die,' advancing and taking her hand with a familiar fondness which made me think him fifty times uglier than nature had made him. She led him, however, a few steps aside; they conversed in an under voice, and she appeared to insist upon some request, which he was unwilling or unable to comply with. I never saw so strong a contrast betwixt the expression of two faces. Miss Vernon's from being earnest became angry. Her eyes and cheeks became more animated, her colour mounted, she clenched her little hand, and, stamping on the ground with her tiny foot, seemed to listen with a mixture of contempt and indignation to the apologies which, from his look of civil deference, his composed and respectful smile, his body rather drawing back than advanced, and other signs of look and person, I concluded him to be pouring out at her feet. At length she flung away from him, with 'I *will* have it so.'

'It is not in my power, there is no possibility of it. Would you think it, Mr. Osbaldistone?' said he, addressing me —

'You are not mad?' said she, interrupting him.

'Would you think it?' said he, without attending to her hint. 'Miss Vernon insists not only that I know your innocence — of which, indeed, it is impossible for any one to be more convinced — but that I must also be acquainted with the real perpetrators of the outrage on this fellow; if, indeed, such an outrage has been committed. Is this reasonable, Mr. Osbaldistone?'

'I will not allow any appeal to Mr. Osbaldistone, Rashleigh,' said the young lady; 'he does not know, as I do, the incredible extent and accuracy of your information on all points.'

'As I am a gentleman, you do me more honour than I deserve.'

'Justice, Rashleigh, only justice; and it is only justice which I expect at your hands.'

'You are a tyrant, Diana,' he answered, with a sort of sigh — 'a capricious tyrant, and rule your friends with a rod of iron. Still, however, it shall be as you desire. But you ought not to be here, you know you ought not; you must return with me.'

Then turning from Diana, who seemed to stand undecided, he came up to me in the most friendly manner, and said, 'Do not doubt my interest in what regards you, Mr. Osbaldistone.'

If I leave you just at this moment, it is only to act for your advantage. But you must use your influence with your cousin to return ; her presence cannot serve you, and must prejudice herself.'

'I assure you, sir,' I replied, 'you cannot be more convinced of this than I ; I have urged Miss Vernon's return as anxiously as she would permit me to do.'

'I have thought on it,' said Miss Vernon, after a pause, 'and I will not go till I see you safe out of the hands of the Philistines. Cousin Rashleigh, I daresay, means well ; but he and I know each other well. Rashleigh, I will not go. I know,' she added, in a more soothing tone, 'my being here will give you more motive for speed and exertion.'

'Stay, then, rash, obstinate girl,' said Rashleigh ; 'you know but too well to whom you trust' ; and, hastening out of the hall, we heard his horse's feet a minute afterwards in rapid motion.

'Thank Heaven, he is gone !' said Diana. 'And now, let us seek out the Justice.'

'Had we not better call a servant ?'

'O, by no means ; I know the way to his den. We must burst on him suddenly ; follow me.'

I did follow her accordingly, as she tripped up a few gloomy steps, traversed a twilight passage, and entered a sort of ante-room, hung round with old maps, architectural elevations, and genealogical trees. A pair of folding-doors opened from this into Mr. Inglewood's sitting apartment, from which was heard the fag-end of an old ditty, chanted by a voice which had been in its day fit for a jolly bottle-song.

'O, in Skipton-in-Craven,
Is never a haven,
But many a day foul weather ;
And he that would say
A pretty girl nay,
I wish for his cravat a tether.'

'Hey day !' said Miss Vernon, 'the genial Justice must have dined already ; I did not think it had been so late.'

It was even so. Mr. Inglewood's appetite having been sharpened by his official investigations, he had ante-dated his meridian repast, having dined at twelve instead of one o'clock, then the general dining hour in England. The various occurrences of the morning occasioned our arriving some time after this hour, to the Justice the most important of the four-and-twenty, and he had not neglected the interval.

'Stay you here,' said Diana; 'I know the house, and I will call a servant; your sudden appearance might startle the old gentleman even to choking'; and she escaped from me, leaving me uncertain whether I ought to advance or retreat. It was impossible for me not to hear some part of what passed within the dinner apartment, and particularly several apologies for declining to sing, expressed in a dejected croaking voice, the tones of which, I conceived, were not entirely new to me.

'Not sing, sir? by our Lady! but you must. What! you have cracked my silver-mounted cocoa-nut of sack, and tell me that you cannot sing! Sir, sack will make a cat sing, and speak too; so up with a merry stave, or trundle yourself out of my doors. Do you think you are to take up all my valuable time with your d—d declarations and then tell me you cannot sing!

'Your worship is perfectly in rule,' said another voice, which, from its pert conceited accent, might be that of the clerk, 'and the party must be conformable; he hath *canet* written on his face in court hand.'

'Up with it, then,' said the Justice, 'or, by St. Christopher, you shall crack the cocoa-nut full of salt-and-water, according to the statute for such effect made and provided.'

Thus exhorted and threatened, my quondam fellow-traveller, for I could no longer doubt that he was the recusant in question, uplifted, with a voice similar to that of a criminal singing his last psalm on the scaffold, a most doleful stave to the following effect:

'Good people all, I pray give ear,
A woeful story you shall hear,
'T is of a robber as stout as ever
Bade a true man stand and deliver.
With his foodle doo fa loodle loo.

'This knave, most worthy of a cord,
Being arm'd with pistol and with sword,
'Twixt Kensington and Brentford then
Did boldly stop six honest men.
With his foodle doo, etc.

'These honest men did at Brentford dine,
Having drank each man his pint of wine,
When this bold thief, with many curses,
Did say, You dogs, your lives or purses.
With his foodle doo, etc.

I question if the honest men whose misfortune is commemorated in this pathetic ditty were more startled at the appear-

ance of the bold thief than the songster was at mine ; for, tired of waiting for some one to announce me, and finding my situation as a listener rather awkward, I presented myself to the company just as my friend, Mr. Morris, for such, it seems, was his name, was uplifting the fifth stave of his doleful ballad. The high tone with which the tune started died away in a quaver of consternation on finding himself so near one whose character he supposed to be little less suspicious than that of the hero of his madrigal, and he remained silent, with a mouth gaping as if I had brought the Gorgon's head in my hand.

The Justice, whose eyes had closed under the influence of the soniferous lullaby of the song, started up in his chair as it suddenly ceased, and stared with wonder at the unexpected addition which the company had received while his organs of sight were in abeyance. The clerk, as I conjectured him to be from his appearance, was also commoved ; for, sitting opposite to Mr. Morris, that honest gentleman's terror communicated itself to him, though he wotted not why.

I broke the silence of surprise occasioned by my abrupt entrance. 'My name, Mr. Inglewood, is Francis Osbaldistone ; I understand that some scoundrel has brought a complaint before you, charging me with being concerned in a loss which he says he has sustained.'

'Sir,' said the Justice, somewhat peevishly, 'these are matters I never enter upon after dinner ; there is a time for everything, and a justice of peace must eat as well as other folks.'

The goodly person of Mr. Inglewood, by the way, seemed by no means to have suffered by any fasts, whether in the service of the law or of religion.

'I beg pardon for an ill-timed visit, sir ; but as my reputation is concerned, and as the dinner appears to be concluded ——'

'It is not concluded, sir,' replied the magistrate ; 'man requires digestion as well as food, and I protest I cannot have benefit from my victuals unless I am allowed two hours of quiet leisure, intermixed with harmless mirth and a moderate circulation of the bottle.'

'If your honour will forgive me,' said Mr. Jobson, who had produced and arranged his writing implements in the brief space that our conversation afforded, 'as this is a case of felony, and the gentleman seems something impatient, the charge is *contra pacem domini regis* ——'

'D—n *dominie regis* !' said the impatient Justice : 'I hope

it's no treason to say so; but it's enough to make one mad to be worried in this way. Have I a moment of my life quiet for warrants, orders, directions, acts, bails, bonds, and recognizances? I pronounce to you, Mr. Jobson, that I shall send you and the justiceship to the devil one of these days.'

'Your honour will consider the dignity of the office — one of the quorum and *custos rotulorum*, an office of which Sir Edward Coke wisely saith, "The whole Christian world hath not the like of it, so it be duly executed."'

'Well,' said the Justice, partly reconciled by this eulogium on the dignity of his situation, and gulping down the rest of his dissatisfaction in a huge bumper of claret, 'let us to this gear then, and get rid of it as fast as we can. Here you, sir — you, Morris — you, knight of the sorrowful countenance — is this Mr. Francis Osbaldistone the gentleman whom you charge with being art and part of felony?'

'I, sir?' replied Morris, whose scattered wits had hardly yet reassembled themselves. 'I charge nothing — I say nothing against the gentleman.'

'Then we dismiss your complaint, sir, that's all, and a good riddance. Push about the bottle. Mr. Osbaldistone, help yourself.'

Jobson, however, was determined that Morris should not back out of the scrape so easily. 'What do you mean, Mr. Morris? Here is your own declaration, the ink scarce dried, and you would retract it in this scandalous manner!'

'How do I know,' whispered the other, in a tremulous tone, 'how many rogues are in the house to back him? I have read of such things in Johnson's *Lives of the Highwaymen*. I protest the door opens —'

And it did open, and Diana Vernon entered. 'You keep fine order here, Justice; not a servant to be seen or heard of.'

'Ah!' said the Justice, starting up with an alacrity which showed that he was not so engrossed by his devotions to Themis or Comus as to forget what was due to beauty. 'ah, ha! Die Vernon, the heath-bell of Cheviot and the blossom of the Border, come to see how the old bachelor keeps house? Art welcome, girl, as flowers in May.'

'A fine, open, hospitable house you do keep, Justice, that must be allowed; not a soul to answer a visitor.'

'Ah! the knaves, they reckoned themselves secure of me for a couple of hours. But why did you not come earlier? Your cousin Rashleigh dined here, and ran away like a poltroon

after the first bottle was out. But you have not dined ; we'll have something nice and ladylike, sweet and pretty like yourself, tossed up in a trice.'

'I may eat a crust in the ante-room before I set out,' answered Miss Vernon — 'I have had a long ride this morning ; but I can't stay long, Justice. I came with my cousin, Frank Osbaldistone, there, and I must show him the way back again to the Hall, or he'll lose himself in the wolds.'

'Whew ! sits the wind in that quarter ?' inquired the Justice.

'She show'd him the way, and she show'd him the way,
She show'd him the way to woo.'

What ! no luck for old fellows, then, my sweet bud of the wilderness ?'

'None whatever, Squire Inglewood ; but if you will be a good kind Justice, and despatch young Frank's business, and let us canter home again, I'll bring my uncle to dine with you next week, and we'll expect merry doings.'

'And you shall find them, my pearl of the Tyne. Zookers, lass, I never envy these young fellows their rides and scampers unless when you come across me. But I must not keep you just now, I suppose ? I am quite satisfied with Mr. Francis Osbaldistone's expianation ; here has been some mistake which can be cleared at greater leisure.'

'Pardon me, sir,' said I, 'but I have not heard the nature of the accusation yet.'

'Yes, sir,' said the clerk, who, at the appearance of Miss Vernon, had taken up the matter in despair, but who picked up courage to press farther investigation on finding himself supported from a quarter whence assuredly he expected no backing — 'yes, sir, and Dalton saith, "That he who is apprehended as a felon shall not be discharged upon any man's discretion, but shall be held either to bail or commitment, paying to the clerk of the peace the usual fees for recognizance or commitment."'

The Justice, thus goaded on, gave me at length a few words of explanation.

It seems the tricks which I had played to this man Morris had made a strong impression on his imagination ; for I found they had been arrayed against me in his evidence, with all the exaggerations which a timorous and heated imagination could suggest. It appeared also that, on the day he parted from me, he had been stopped on a solitary spot and eased of

his beloved travelling companion, the portmanteau, by two men well mounted and armed, having their faces covered with vizards.

One of them, he conceived, had much of my shape and air, and in a whispering conversation which took place betwixt the freebooters he heard the other apply to him the name of Osbaldistone. The declaration further set forth that, upon inquiring into the principles of the family so named, he, the said declarant, was informed that they were of the worst description, the family, in all its members, having been Papists and Jacobites, as he was given to understand by the dissenting clergyman at whose house he stopped after his *rencontre*, since the days of William the Conqueror.

Upon all and each of these weighty reasons he charged me with being accessory to the felony committed upon his person; he, the said declarant, then travelling in the special employment of government, and having charge of certain important papers, and also a large sum in specie, to be paid over, according to his instructions, to certain persons of official trust and importance in Scotland.

Having heard this extraordinary accusation, I replied to it, that the circumstances on which it was founded were such as could warrant no justice or magistrate in any attempt on my personal liberty. I admitted that I had practised a little upon the terrors of Mr. Morris while we travelled together, but in such trifling particulars as could have excited apprehension in no one who was one whit less timorous and jealous than himself. But I added, that I had never seen him since we parted, and if that which he feared had really come upon him, I was in no ways accessory to an action so unworthy of my character and station in life. That one of the robbers was called Osbaldistone, or that such a name was mentioned in the course of the conversation betwixt them, was a trifling circumstance, to which no weight was due. And concerning the disaffection alleged against me, I was willing to prove to the satisfaction of the Justice, the clerk, and even the witness himself, that I was of the same persuasion as his friend the dissenting clergyman; had been educated as a good subject in the principles of the Revolution, and as such now demanded the personal protection of the laws which had been assured by that great event.

The Justice fidgeted, took snuff, and seemed considerably embarrassed, while Mr. Attorney Jobson, with all the volubility of his profession, ran over the statute of the Thirty-Four

Edward III., by which justices of the peace are allowed to arrest all those whom they find by indictment or suspicion, and to put them into prison. The rogue even turned my own admissions against me, alleging 'that, since I had confessedly, upon my own showing, assumed the bearing or deportment of a robber or malefactor, I had voluntarily subjected myself to the suspicions of which I complained, and brought myself within the compass of the act, having wilfully clothed my conduct with all the colour and livery of guilt.'

I combated both his arguments and his jargon with much indignation and scorn, and observed, 'that I should, if necessary, produce the bail of my relations, which I conceived could not be refused without subjecting the magistrate in a misdemeanour.'

'Pardon me, my good sir — pardon me,' said the insatiable clerk, 'this is a case in which neither bail nor mainprize can be received, the felon who is liable to be committed on heavy grounds of suspicion not being replevisable under the statute of the Third of King Edward, there being in that act an express exception of such as be charged of commandment or force, and aid of felony done'; and he hinted that his worship would do well to remember that such were no way replevisable by common writ, nor without writ.

At this period of the conversation a servant entered and delivered a letter to Mr. Jobson. He had no sooner run it hastily over than he exclaimed, with the air of one who wished to appear much vexed at the interruption, and felt the consequence attached to a man of multifarious avocations — 'Good God! why, at this rate, I shall have neither time to attend to the public concerns nor my own — no rest — no quiet. I wish to Heaven another gentleman in our line would settle here!'

'God forbid!' said the Justice, in a tone of *sotto voce* deprecation; 'some of us have enough of one of the tribe.'

'This is a matter of life and death, if your worship pleases.'

'In God's name! no more justice business, I hope, said the alarmed magistrate.

'No — no,' replied Mr. Jobson, very consequentially. 'Old Gaffer Rutledge of Grime's Hill is subpoena'd for the next world; he has sent an express for Dr. Killdown to put in bail, another for me to arrange his worldly affairs.'

'Away with you, then,' said Mr. Inglewood, hastily; 'his may not be a replevisable case under the statute, you know, or Mr. Justice Death may not like the doctor for a *main pernor* or bailsmen.'

'And yet,' said Jobson, lingering as he moved towards the door, 'if my presence here be necessary - I could make out the warrant for committal in a moment, and the constable is below. And you have heard,' he said, lowering his voice, 'Mr. Rashleigh's opinion ——' the rest was lost in a whisper.

The Justice replied aloud, 'I tell thee no, man, no; we'll do nought till thou return, man; 't is but a four-mile ride. Come, push the bottle, Mr. Morris. Don't be cast down, Mr. Osbaldistone. And you, my rose of the wilderness — one cup of claret to refresh the bloom of your cheeks.'

Diana started, as if from a reverie, in which she appeared to have been plunged while we held this discussion. 'No, Justice, I should be afraid of transferring the bloom to a part of my face where it would show to little advantage. But I will pledge you in a cooler beverage'; and, filling a glass with water, she drank it hastily, while her hurried manner belied her assumed gaiety.

I had not much leisure to make remarks upon her demeanour, however, being full of vexation at the interference of fresh obstacles to an instant examination of the disgraceful and impertinent charge which was brought against me. But there was no moving the Justice to take the matter up in absence of his clerk, an incident which gave him apparently as much pleasure as a holiday to a school-boy. He persisted in his endeavours to inspire jollity into a company the individuals of which, whether considered with reference to each other or to their respective situations, were no means inclined to mirth. 'Come, Master Morris, you're the first man that's been robbed, I trow; grieving ne'er brought back loss, man. And you, Mr. Frank Osbaldistone, are not the first bully-boy that has said stand to a true man. There was Jack Winterfield, in my young days, kept the best company in the land — at horse-races and cock-fights who but he — hand and glove was I with Jack. Push the bottle, Mr. Morris, it's dry talking. Many quart bumpers have I cracked, and thrown many a merry main with poor Jack — good family, ready wit, quick eye, as honest a fellow, barring the deed he died —— we'll drink to his memory, gentlemen. Poor Jack Winterfield! And since we talk of him, and of those sort of things, and since that d—d clerk of mine has taken his gibberish elsewhere, and since we're snug among ourselves, Mr. Osbaldistone, if you will have my best advice, I would take up this matter — the law's hard, very severe, hanged poor Jack Winterfield at York, despite family connexions and

great interest — all for easing a fat west-country grazier of the price of a few beasts. Now here is honest Mr. Morris has been frightened, and so forth. D—n it, man, let the poor fellow have back his portmanteau and end the frolic at once.'

Morris's eyes brightened up at this suggestion, and he began to hesitate forth an assurance that he thirsted for no man's blood, when I cut the proposed accommodation short by resenting the Justice's suggestion as an insult that went directly to suppose me guilty of the very crime which I had come to his house with the express intention of disavowing. We were in this awkward predicament when a servant, opening the door, announced, 'A strange gentleman to wait upon his honour'; and the party whom he thus described entered the room without farther ceremony.

CHAPTER IX

One of the thieves come back again! I'll stand close.
He dares not wrong me now, so near the house,
And call in vain 't is, till I see him offer it.

The Widow.

'A STRANGER!' echoed the Justice; 'not upon business, I trust, for I'll be ——'

His protestation was cut short by the answer of the man himself. 'My business is of a nature somewhat onerous and particular,' said my acquaintance, Mr. Campbell, — for it was he, the very Scotchman whom I had seen at Northallerton, — 'and I must solicit your honour to give instant and heedful consideration to it. I believe, Mr. Morris,' he added, fixing his eye on that person with a look of peculiar firmness and almost ferocity — 'I believe ye ken brawly what I am — I believe ye cannot have forgotten what passed at our last meeting on the road?' Morris's jaw dropped, his countenance became the colour of tallow, his teeth chattered, and he gave visible signs of the utmost consternation. 'Take heart of grace, man,' said Campbell, 'and dinna sit clattering your jaws there like a pair of castanets! I think there can be nae difficulty in your telling Mr. Justice that ye have seen me of yore, and ken me to be a cavalier of fortune and a man of honour. Ye ken fu' weel ye will be some time resident in my vicinity, when I may have the power, as I will possess the inclination, to do you as good a turn.'

'Sir — sir, I believe you to be a man of honour, and, as you say, a man of fortune. Yes, Mr. Inglewood,' he added, clearing his voice, 'I really believe this gentleman to be so.'

'And what are this gentleman's commands with me?' said the Justice, somewhat peevishly. 'One man introduces another, like the rhymes in the "House that Jack built," and I get company without either peace or conversation!'

'Both shall be yours, sir,' answered Campbell, 'in a brief

period of time. I come to release your mind from a piece of troublesome duty, not to make increment to it.'

'Body o' me! then you are welcome as ever Scot was to England, and that's not saying much; but get on, man, let's hear what you have got to say at once.'

'I presume this gentleman,' continued the North Briton, 'told you there was a person of the name of Campbell with him when he had the mischance to lose his valise?'

'He has not mentioned such a name from beginning to end of the matter,' said the Justice.

'Ah! I conceive — I conceive,' replied Mr. Campbell. 'Mr. Morris was kindly afeared of committing a stranger into collision wi' the judicial forms of the country; but as I understand my evidence is necessary to the compurgation of an honest gentleman here, Mr. Francis Osbaldistone, wha has been most unjustly suspected, I will dispense with the precaution. Ye will, therefore,' he added, addressing Morris with the same determined look and accent, 'please tell Mr. Justice Inglewood whether we did not travel several miles together on the road, in consequence of your own anxious request and suggestion, reiterated ance and again, baith on the evening that we were at Northallerton, and there declined by me, but afterwards accepted, when I overtook ye on the road near Cloberry Allers, and was prevailed on by you to resign my ain intentions of proceeding to Rothbury; and, for my misfortune, to accompany you on your proposed route.'

'It's a melancholy truth,' answered Morris, holding down his head as he gave this general assent to the long and leading question which Campbell put to him, and seeming to acquiesce in the statement it contained with rueful docility.

'And I presume you can also asseverate to his worship that no man is better qualified than I am to bear testimony in this case, seeing that I was by you, and near you, constantly during the whole occurrence?'

'No man better qualified, certainly,' said Morris, with a deep and embarrassed sigh.

'And why the devil did you not assist him then,' said the Justice, 'since, by Mr. Morris's account, there were but two robbers; so you were two to two, and you are both stout likely men?'

'Sir, if it please your worship,' said Campbell, 'I have been all my life a man of peace and quietness, no ways given to broils or batteries. Mr. Morris, who belongs, as I understand,

or hath belonged, to his Majesty's army, might have used his pleasure in resistance, he travelling, as I also understand, with a great charge of treasure ; but for me, who had but my own small peculiar to defend, and who am, moreover, a man of a pacific occupation, I was unwilling to commit myself to hazard in the matter.'

I looked at Campbell as he uttered these words, and never recollect to have seen a more singular contrast than that between the strong daring sternness expressed in his harsh features, and the air of composed meekness and simplicity which his language assumed. There was even a slight ironical smile lurking about the corners of his mouth, which seemed, involuntarily as it were, to intimate his disdain of the quiet and peaceful character which he thought proper to assume, and which led me to entertain strange suspicions that his concern in the violence done to Morris had been something very different from that of a fellow-sufferer, or even of a mere spectator.

Perhaps some such suspicions crossed the Justice's mind at the moment, for he exclaimed, as if by way of ejaculation, 'Body o' me! but this is a strange story.'

The North Briton seemed to guess at what was passing in his mind ; for he went on, with a change of manner and tone, dismissing from his countenance some part of the hypocritical affectation of humility which had made him obnoxious to suspicion, and saying, with a more frank and unconstrained air, 'To say the truth, I am just ane o' those canny folks wha care not to fight but when they hae gotten something to fight for, which did not chance to be my predicament when I fell in wi' these loons. But, that your worship may know that I am a person of good fame and character, please to cast your eye over that billet.'

Mr. Inglewood took the paper from his hands, and read half aloud, 'These are to certify that the bearer, Robert Campbell of — of some place which I cannot pronounce,' interjected the Justice, 'is a person of good lineage and peaceable demeanour, travelling towards England on his own proper affairs, etc. etc. etc. Given under our hand, at our Castle of Inver Invera—rara— ARGYLE.'

'A slight testimonial, sir, which I thought fit to impetrate from that worthy nobleman (here he raised his hand to his head, as if to touch his hat) MacCallum More.'

'MacCallum who, sir?' said the Justice.

'Whom the Southern call the Duke of Argyle.'

'I know the Duke of Argyle very well to be a nobleman of great worth and distinction, and a true lover of his country. I was one of those that stood by him in 1714, when he unhorsed the Duke of Marlborough out of his command. I wish we had more noblemen like him. He was an honest Tory in those days, and hand and glove with Ormond. And he has acceded to the present government, as I have done myself, for the peace and quiet of his country; for I cannot presume that great man to have been actuated, as violent folks pretend, with the fear of losing his places and regiment. His testimonial, as you call it, Mr. Campbell, is perfectly satisfactory; and now, what have you got to say to this matter of the robbery?'

'Briefly this, if it please your worship: that Mr. Morris might as weel charge it against the babe yet to be born, or against myself even, as against this young gentleman, Mr. Osbaldistone; for I am not only free to depone that the person for whom he took him was a shorter man, and a thicker man, but also, for I chanced to obtain a glist of his visage, as his fause-face slipped aside, that he was a man of other features and complexion than those of this young gentleman, Mr. Osbaldistone. And I believe,' he added, turning round with a natural yet somewhat sterner air, to Mr. Morris, 'that the gentleman will allow I had better opportunity to take cognizance wha were present on that occasion than he, being, I believe, much the cooler o' the twa.'

'I agree to it, sir — I agree to it perfectly,' said Morris, shrinking back, as Campbell moved his chair towards him to fortify his appeal. 'And I incline, sir,' he added, addressing Mr. Inglewood, 'to retract my information as to Mr. Osbaldistone; and I request, sir, you will permit him, sir, to go about his business, and me to go about mine also; your worship may have business to settle with Mr. Campbell, and I am rather in haste to be gone.'

'Then, there go the declarations,' said the Justice, throwing them into the fire. 'And now you are at perfect liberty, Mr. Osbaldistone. And you, Mr. Morris, are set quite at your ease.'

'Ay,' said Campbell, eyeing Morris as he assented with a rueful grin to the Justice's observations, 'much like the case of a toad under a pair of harrows. But fear nothing, Mr. Morris; you and I maun leave the house thegither. I will see you safe — I hope you will ~~not~~ doubt my honour when I say sae — to the next highway, and then we part company; and if

we do not meet as friends in Scotland, it will be your ain fault.'

With such a lingering look of terror as the condemned criminal throws when he is informed that the cart awaits him, Morris arose, but when on his legs appeared to hesitate. 'I te! thee, man, fear nothing,' reiterated Campbell; 'I will keep my word with you. Why, thou sheep's heart, how do ye ken but we may can pick up some speerings of your valise, if ye will be amenable to gude counsel? Our horses are ready. Bid the Justice fareweel, man, and show your southern breeding.'

Morris, thus exhorted and encouraged, took his leave, under the escort of Mr. Campbell, but apparently new scruples and terrors had struck him before they left the house, for I heard Campbell reiterating assurances of safety and protection as they left the ante-room — 'By the soul of my body, man, thou'rt as safe as in thy father's kail-yard. Zounds! that a chield wi' sic a black beard should hae nae mair heart than a hen-partridge! Come on wi' ye, like a frank fallow, anes and for aye.'

The voices died away, and the subsequent trampling of their horses announced to us that they had left the mansion of Justice Inglewood.

The joy which that worthy magistrate received at this easy conclusion of a matter which threatened him with some trouble in his judicial capacity, was somewhat damped by reflection on what his clerk's views of the transaction might be at his return. 'Now I shall have Jobson on my shoulders about these d—d papers; I doubt I should not have destroyed them, after all. But hang it, it is only paying his fees, and that will make all smooth. And now, Miss Die Vernon, though I have liberated all the others, I intend to sign a writ for committing you to the custody of Mother Blakes, my old housekeeper, for the evening, and we will send for my neighbour, Mrs. Musgrave, and the Miss Dawkins, and your cousins, and have old Cobs the fiddler, and be as merry as the maids; and Frank Osbaldistone and I will have a carouse that will make us fit company for you in half an hour.'

'Thanks, most worshipful,' returned Miss Vernon; 'but, as matters stand, we must return instantly to Osbaldistone Hall, where they do not know what has become of us, and relieve my uncle of his anxiety on my cousin's account, which is just the same as if one of his own sons were concerned.'

'I believe it truly,' said the Justice; 'for when his eldest son, Archie, came to a bad end, in that unlucky affair of Sir

John Fenwick's, old Hildebrand used to halloo out his name as readily as any of the remaining six, and then complain that he could not recollect which of his sons had been hanged. So pray hasten home and relieve his paternal solicitude, since go you must. But, hark thee hither, heath-blossom,' he said, pulling her towards him by the hand, and in a good-humoured tone of admonition, 'another time let the law take its course, without putting your pretty finger into her old musty pie, all full of fragments of law gibberish — French and dog-Latin. And, Die, my beauty, let young fellows show each other the way through the moors, in case you should lose your own road while you are pointing out theirs, my pretty Will o' the Wisp.'

With this admonition he saluted and dismissed Miss Vernon, and took an equally kind farewell of me.

'Thou seems to be a good tight lad, Mr. Frank, and I remember thy father too; he was my playfellow at school. Hark thee, lad, ride early at night, and don't swagger with chance passengers on the king's highway. What, man! all the king's liege subjects are not bound to understand joking, and it's ill cracking jests on matters of felony. And here's poor Die Vernon too — in a manner alone and deserted on the face of this wide earth, and left to ride and run and scamper at her own silly pleasure. Thou must be careful of Die, or, egad, I will turn a young fellow again on purpose, and fight thee myself, although I must own it would be a great deal of trouble. And now, get ye both gone, and leave me to my pipe of tobacco and my meditations; for what says the song —

The Indian leaf doth briefly burn;
So doth man's strength to weakness turn;
The fire of youth extinguish'd quite,
Comes age, like embers, dry and white.
Think of this as you take tobacco.'¹

I was much pleased with the gleams of sense and feeling which escaped from the Justice through the vapours of sloth and self-indulgence, assured him of my respect to his admonitions, and took a friendly farewell of the honest magistrate and his hospitable mansion.

We found a repast prepared for us in the ante-room, which we partook of slightly, and rejoined the same servant of Sir Hildebrand who had taken our horses at our entrance, and who had been directed, as he informed Miss Vernon, by Mr. Rash-

¹ See Tobacco. Note 2.

leigh, to wait and attend upon us home. We rode a little way in silence, for, to say truth, my mind was too much bewildered with the events of the morning to permit me to be the first to break it. At length Miss Vernon exclaimed, as if giving vent to her own reflections, 'Well, Rashleigh is a man to be feared and wondered at, and all but loved: he does whatever he pleases, and makes all others his puppets; has a player ready to perform every part which he imagines, and an invention and readiness which supply expedients for every emergency.'

'You think, then,' said I, answering rather to her meaning than to the express words she made use of, 'that this Mr. Campbell, whose appearance was so opportune, and who trussed up and carried off my accuser as a falcon trusses a partridge, was an agent of Mr. Rashleigh Osbaldistone?'

'I do guess as much,' replied Diana, 'and shrewdly suspect, moreover, that he would hardly have appeared so very much in the nick of time if I had not happened to meet Rashleigh in the hall at the Justice's.'

'In that case my thanks are chiefly due to you, my fair preserver.'

'To be sure they are,' returned Diana; 'and pray, suppose them paid, and accepted with a gracious smile, for I do not care to be troubled with hearing them in good earnest, and am much more likely to yawn than to behave becoming. In short, Mr. Frank, I wished to serve you, and I have fortunately been able to do so, and have only one favour to ask in return, and that is, that you will say no more about it. But who comes here to meet us, "bloody with spurring, fiery-red with haste"? It is the subordinate man of law, I think; no less than Mr. Joseph Jobson.'

And Mr. Joseph Jobson it proved to be, in great haste, and, as it speedily appeared, in most extreme bad humour. He came up to us and stopped his horse, as we were about to pass with a slight salutation.

'So, sir — so, Miss Vernon — ay, I see well enough how it is: bail put in during my absence, I suppose? I should like to know who drew the recognizance, that's all. If his worship uses this form of procedure often, I advise him to get another clerk, that's all, for I shall certainly demit.'

'Or suppose he get his present clerk stitched to his sleeve, Mr. Jobson,' said Diana, 'would not that do as well? And pray how does Farmer Rutledge, Mr. Jobson? I hope you found him able to sign, seal, and deliver?'

This question seemed greatly to increase the wrath of the man of law. He looked at Miss Vernon with such an air of spite and resentment as laid me under a strong temptation to knock him off his horse with the butt of my whip, which I only suppressed in consideration of his insignificance.

'Farmer Rutledge, ma'am!' said the clerk, so soon as his indignation permitted him to articulate, 'Farmer Rutledge is in as handsome enjoyment of his health as you are; it's all a bam, ma'am — all a bamboozle and a bite that affair of his illness; and if you did not know as much before, you know it now, ma'am.'

'La you there now!' replied Miss Vernon, with an affectation of extreme and simple wonder, 'sure you don't say so, Mr. Jobson?'

'But I *do* say so, ma'am,' rejoined the incensed scribe; 'and moreover I say, that the old miserly clod-breaker called me pettifogger — pettifogger, ma'am — and said I came to hunt for a job, ma'am, which I have no more right to have said to me than any other gentleman of my profession, ma'am, especially as I am clerk to the peace, having and holding said office under *Trigesimo Septimo Henricj Octavi*, and *Primo Gulielmi*, the first of King William, ma'am, of glorious and immortal memory — our immortal deliverer from Papists and pretenders, and wooden shoes and warming-pans, Miss Vernon.'

'Sad things, these wooden shoes and warming-pans,' retorted the young lady, who seemed to take pleasure in augmenting his wrath; 'and it is a comfort you don't seem to want a warming-pan at present, Mr. Jobson. I am afraid Gaffer Rutledge has not confined his incivility to language. Are you sure he did not give you a beating?'

'Beating, ma'am! — no (very shortly); no man alive shall beat me, I promise you, ma'am.'

'That is according as you happen to merit, sir,' said I; 'for your mode of speaking to this young lady is so unbecoming that, if you do not change your tone, I shall think it worth while to chastise you myself.'

'Chastise, sir! and me, sir! Do you know whom you speak to, sir?'

'Yes, sir,' I replied; 'you say yourself you are clerk of peace to the county; and Gaffer Rutledge says you are a pettifogger; and in neither capacity are you entitled to be impertinent to a young lady of fashion.'

Miss Vernon laid her hand on my arm and exclaimed, 'Come,

Mr. Osbaldistone, I will have no assaults and battery on Mr. Jobson; I am not in sufficient charity with him to permit a single touch of your whip; why, he would live on it for a term at least. Besides, you have already hurt his feelings sufficiently: you have called him impertinent.

'I don't value his language, Miss,' said the clerk, somewhat crestfallen; 'besides, impertinent is not an actionable word; but pettifogger is slander in the highest degree, and that I will make Gaffer Rutledge know to his cost, and all who maliciously repeat the same to the breach of the public peace, and the taking away of my private good name.'

'Never mind that, Mr. Jobson,' said Miss Vernon; 'you know, where there is nothing, your own law allows that the king himself must lose his rights; and for the taking away of your good name, I pity the poor fellow who gets it, and wish you joy of losing it with all my heart.'

'Very well, ma'am, good evening, ma'am; I have no more to say — only there are laws against Papists, which it would be well for the land were they better executed. There's Third and Fourth Edward VI., of antiphoners, missals, grailes, processions, manuals, legends, pies, portuasses, and those that have such trinkets in their possession, Miss Vernon; and there's summoning of Papists to take the oaths; and there are popish recusant convicts under the First of his present Majesty; ay, and there are penalties for hearing mass. See Twenty-Third of Queen Elizabeth, and Third James I., Chapter Twenty-Fifth. And there are estates to be registered, and deeds and wills to be enrolled, and double taxes to be made, according to the acts in that case made and provided —'

'See the new edition of the Statutes at Large, published under the careful revision of Joseph Jobson, Gent., Clerk of the Peace,' said Miss Vernon.

'Also, and above all,' continued Jobson — 'for I speak to your warning — you, Diana Vernon, spinstress, not being a *femme couverte*, and being a convict popish recusant, are bound to repair to your own dwelling, and that by the nearest way, under penalty of being held felon to the king; and diligently to seek for passage at common ferries, and to tarry there but one ebb and flood; and unless you can have it in such places, to walk every day into the water up to the knees, assaying to pass over.'

'A sort of Protestant penance for my Catholic errors, I suppose,' said Miss Vernon, laughing. 'Well, I thank you for

the information, Mr. Jobson, and will hie me home as fast as I can, and be a better housekeeper in time coming. Good-night, my dear Mr. Jobson, thou mirror of clerical courtesy.'

'Good-night, ma'am, and remember the law is not to be trifled with.'

And we rode on our separate ways.

'There he goes for a troublesome mischief-making tool,' said Miss Vernon, as she gave a glance after him; 'it is hard that persons of birth and rank and estate should be subjected to the official impertinence of such a paltry pickthank as that, merely for believing as the whole world believed not much above a hundred years ago; for certainly our Catholic faith has the advantage of antiquity at least.'

'I was much tempted to have broken the rascal's head,' I replied.

'You would have acted very like a hasty young man,' said Miss Vernon; 'and yet, had my own hand been an ounce heavier than it is, I think I should have laid its weight upon him. Well, it does not signify complaining, but there are three things for which I am much to be pitied, if any one thought it worth while to waste any compassion upon me.'

'And what are these three things, Miss Vernon, may I ask?'

'Will you promise me your deepest sympathy? I tell you?'

'Certainly; can you doubt it?' I replied, closing my horse nearer to hers as I spoke, with an expression of interest which I did not attempt to disguise.

'Well, it is very seducing to be pitied, after all; so here are my three grievances. In the first place, I am a girl and not a young fellow, and would be shut up in a mad-house if I did half the things that I have a mind to; and that, if I had your happy prerogative of acting as you list, would make all the world mad with imitating and applauding me.'

'I can't quite afford you the sympathy you expect upon this score,' I replied; 'the misfortune is so general that it belongs to one half of the species; and the other half——'

'Are so much better cared for that they are jealous of their prerogatives,' interrupted Miss Vernon; 'I forgot you were a party interested. Nay,' said she, as I was going to speak, 'that soft smile is intended to be the preface of a very pretty compliment respecting the peculiar advantages which Die Vernon's friends and kinsmen enjoy by her being born one of their helots; but spare me the utterance, my good friend, and let us try whether we shall agree better on the second

count of my indictment against fortune, as that quill-driving puppy would call it. I belong to an oppressed sect and antiquated religion, and, instead of getting credit for my devotion, as is due to all good girls beside, my kind friend, Justice Inglewood, may send me to the house of correction, merely for worshipping God in the way of my ancestors, and say, as old Pembroke did to the Abbess of Wilton,¹ when he usurped her convent and establishment, "Go spin, you jade—go spin."

'This is not a cureless evil,' said I, gravely. 'Consult some of our learned divines, or consult your own excellent understanding, Miss Vernon, and surely the particulars in which our religious creed differs from that in which you have been educated —'

'Hush!' said Diana, placing her forefinger on her mouth, — 'hush! no more of that. Forsake the faith of my gallant fathers! I would as soon, were I a man, forsake their banner when the tide of battle pressed hardest against it, and turn, like a hireling recreant, to join the victorious enemy.'

'I honour your spirit, Miss Vernon; and as to the inconveniences to which it exposes you, I can only say that wounds sustained for the sake of conscience carry their own balsam with the blow.'

'Ay; but they are fretful and irritating for all that. But I see, hard of heart as you are, my chance of beating hemp, or drawing out flax into marvellous coarse thread, affects you as little as my condemnation to coif and pinnars instead of beaver and cockade; so I will spare myself the fruitless pains of telling my third cause of vexation.'

'Nay, my dear Miss Vernon, do not withdraw your confidence, and I will promise you that the threefold sympathy due to your very unusual causes of distress shall be all duly and truly paid to account of the third, providing you assure me that it is one which you neither share with all womankind nor even with every Catholic in England, who, God bless you, are still a sect more numerous than we Protestants, in our zeal for church and state, would desire them to be.'

'It is, indeed,' said Diana, with a manner greatly altered, and more serious than I had yet seen her assume, 'a misfortune that well merits compassion. I am by nature, as you may easily observe, of a frank and unreserved disposition—a plain true-hearted girl, who would willingly act openly and honestly by the whole world, and yet fate has involved me in

¹ See Nunnery of Wilton. Note 3.

such a series of nets and toils and entanglements that I dare hardly speak a word for fear of consequences — not to myself but to others.'

'That is indeed a misfortune, Miss Vernon, which I do most sincerely compassionate, but which I should hardly have anticipated.'

'O, Mr. Osbaldistone, if you but knew — if any one knew, what difficulty I sometimes find in hiding an aching heart with a smooth brow, you would indeed pity me. I do wrong, perhaps, in speaking to you even thus far on my own situation; but you are a young man of sense and penetration, you cannot but long to ask me a hundred questions on the events of this day, on the share which Rashleigh has in your deliverance from this petty scrape, upon many other points which cannot but excite your attention, and I cannot bring myself to answer with the necessary falsehood and finesse; I should do it awkwardly, and lose your good opinion, if I have any share of it, as well as my own. It is best to say at once, Ask me no questions, I have it not in my power to reply to them.'

Miss Vernon spoke these words with a tone of feeling which could not but make a corresponding impression upon me. I assured her she had neither to fear my urging her with impertinent questions nor my misconstruing her declining to answer those which might in themselves be reasonable, or at least natural.

'I was too much obliged,' I said, 'by the interest she had taken in my affairs to misuse the opportunity her goodness had afforded me of prying into hers; I only trusted and entreated that, if my services could at any time be useful, she would command them without doubt or hesitation.'

'Thank you — thank you,' she replied; 'your voice does not ring the cuckoo chime of compliment, but speaks like that of one who knows to what he pledges himself. If — but it is impossible — but yet, *if* an opportunity should occur, I will ask you if you remember this promise; and I assure you I shall not be angry if I find you have forgotten it, for it is enough that you are sincere in your intentions just now; much may occur to alter them ere I call upon you, should that moment ever come, to assist Die Vernon as if you were Die Vernon's brother.'

'And if I were Die Vernon's brother,' said I, 'there could not be less chance that I should refuse my assistance. And

now I am afraid I must not ask whether Rashleigh was willingly accessory to my deliverance ?'

'Not of me ; but you may ask it of himself, and depend upon it he will say *yes* ; for, rather than any good action should walk through the world like an unappropriated adjective in an ill-arranged sentence, he is always willing to stand noun substantive to it himself.'

'And I must not ask whether this Campbell be himself the party who eased Mr. Morris of his portmanteau, or whether the letter which our friend the attorney received was not a finesse to withdraw him from the scene of action, lest he should have marred the happy event of my deliverance ? And I must not ask —'

'You must ask nothing of me,' said Miss Vernon ; 'so it is quite in vain to go on putting cases. You are to think just as well of me as if I had answered all these queries, and twenty others besides, as glibly as Rashleigh could have done ; and observe, whenever I touch my chin just so, it is a sign that I cannot speak upon the topic which happens to occupy your attention. I must settle signals of correspondence with you, because you are to be my confidant and my counsellor, only you are to know nothing whatever of my affairs.'

'Nothing can be more reasonable,' I replied, laughing ; 'and the extent of your confidence will, you may rely upon it, only be equalled by the sagacity of my counsels.'

This sort of conversation brought us, in the highest good-humour with each other, to Osbaldistone Hall, where we found the family far advanced in the revels of the evening.

'Get some dinner for Mr. Osbaldistone and me in the library,' said Miss Vernon to a servant. 'I must have some compassion upon you,' she added, turning to me, 'and provide against your starving in this mansion of brutal abundance ; otherwise I am not sure that I should show you my private haunts. This same library is my den, the only corner of the Hall-house where I am safe from the ourang-outangs, my cousins. They never venture there, I suppose for fear the folios should fall down and crack their skulls ; for they will never affect their heads in any other way. So follow me.'

And I followed through hall and bower, vaulted passage and winding stair, until we reached the room where she had ordered our refreshments.

CHAPTER X

In the wide pile, by others heeded not,
Hers was one sacred solitary spot,
Whose gloomy aisles and bending shelves contain
For moral hunger food, and cures for moral pain.

Anonymous.

THE library at Osbaldistone Hall was a gloomy room whose antique oaken shelves bent beneath the weight of the ponderous folios so dear to the seventeenth century, from which, under favour be it spoken, we have distilled matter for our quartos and octavos, and which, once more subjected to the alembic, may, should our sons be yet more frivolous than ourselves, be still farther reduced into duodecimos and pamphlets. The collection was chiefly of the classics, as well foreign as ancient history, and, above all, divinity. It was in wretched order. The priests who in succession had acted as chaplains at the Hall were for many years the only persons who entered its precincts, until Rashleigh's thirst for reading had led him to disturb the venerable spiders who had muffled the fronts of the presses with their tapestry. His destination for the church rendered his conduct less absurd in his father's eyes than if any of his other descendants had betrayed so strange a propensity, and Sir Hildebrand acquiesced in the library receiving some repairs, so as to fit it for a sitting-room. Still an air of dilapidation, as obvious as it was uncomfortable, pervaded the large apartment, and announced the neglect from which the knowledge which its walls contained had not been able to exempt it. The tattered tapestry, the worm-eaten shelves, the huge and clumsy, yet tottering, tables, desks, and chairs, the rusty grate, seldom gladdened by either sea-coal or fagots, intimated the contempt of the lords of Osbaldistone Hall for learning, and for the volumes which record its treasures.

'You think this place somewhat disconsolate, I suppose?'

said Diana, as I glanced my eye round the forlorn apartment ; 'but to me it seems like a little paradise, for I call it my own and fear no intrusion. Rashleigh was joint proprietor with me while we were friends.'

'And are you no longer so ?' was my natural question.

Her forefinger immediately touched her dimpled chin, with an arch look of prohibition.

'We are still *allies*,' she continued, 'bound, like other confederate powers, by circumstances of mutual interest ; but I am afraid, as will happen in other cases, the treaty of alliance has survived the amicable dispositions in which it had its origin. At any rate we live less together, and when he comes through that door there I vanish through this door here ; and so, having made the discovery that we two were one too many for this apartment, as large as it seems, Rashleigh, whose occasions frequently call him elsewhere, has generously made a cession of his rights in my favour ; so that I now endeavour to prosecute alone the studies in which he used formerly to be my guide.'

'And what are those studies, if I may presume to ask ?'

'Indeed you may, without the least fear of seeing my forefinger raised to my chin. Science and history are my principal favourites ; but I also study poetry and the classics.'

'And the classics ? Do you read them in the original ?'

'Unquestionably ; Rashleigh, who is no contemptible scholar, taught me Greek and Latin, as well as most of the languages of modern Europe. I assure you, there has been some pains taken in my education, although I can neither sew a tucker, nor work cross-stitch, nor make a pudding, nor, as the vicar's fat wife, with as much truth as elegance, good-will, and politeness, was pleased to say in my behalf, do any other useful thing in the varsal world.'

'And was this selection of studies Rashleigh's choice or your own, Miss Vernon ?' I asked.

'Um !' said she, as if hesitating to answer my question, 'it's not worth while lifting my finger about, after all ; why, partly his and partly mine. As I learned out of doors to ride a horse, and bridle and saddle him in case of necessity, and to clear a five-barred gate, and fire a gun without winking, and all other of those masculine accomplishments that my brute cousins run mad after, I wanted, like my rational cousin, to read Greek and Latin within doors, and make my complete approach to the tree of knowledge, which you men-scholars would engross to

yourselves, in revenge, I suppose, for our common mother's share in the great original transgression.'

'And Rashleigh readily indulged your propensity to learning?'

'Why, he wished to have me for his scholar, and he could but teach me that which he knew himself; he was not likely to instruct me in the mysteries of washing lace ruffles or hemming cambric handkerchiefs, I suppose.'

'I admit the temptation of getting such a scholar, and have no doubt that it made a weighty consideration on the tutor's part.'

'O, if you begin to investigate Rashleigh's motives, my finger touches my chin once more. I can only be frank where my own are inquired into. But to resume — he has resigned the library in my favour, and never enters without leave had and obtained; and so I have taken the liberty to make it the place of deposit for some of my own goods and chattels, as you may see by looking round you.'

'I beg pardon, Miss Vernon, but I really see nothing around these walls which I can distinguish as likely to claim you as mistress.'

'That is, I suppose, because you neither see a shepherd or shepherdess wrought in worsted and handsomely framed in black ebony, or a stuffed parrot, or a breeding-cage full of canary-birds, or a housewife-case, brodered with tarnished silver, or a toilette-table, with a nest of japanned boxes, with as many angles as Christmas minced pies, or a broken-backed spinet, or a lute with three strings, or rock-work, or shell-work, or needle-work, or work of any kind, or a lap-dog, with a litter of blind puppies. None of these treasures do I possess,' she continued, after a pause in order to recover the breath she had lost in enumerating them. 'But there stands the sword of my ancestor, Sir Richard Vernon, slain at Shrewsbury, and sorely slandered by a sad fellow called Will Shakspeare, whose Lancastrian partialities, and a certain knack at embodying them, has turned history upside down, or rather inside out; and by that redoubted weapon hangs the mail of the still older Vernon, squire to the Black Prince, whose fate is the reverse of his descendant's, since he is more indebted to the bard who took the trouble to celebrate him for good-will than for talents —

Amidst the route you might discern one
Brave knight, with pipes on shield, yeaped Vernon;
Like a borne fiend along the plain he thundered,
Prest to be carving throtes, while others plundered.

Then there is a model of a new martingale which I invented myself—a great improvement on the Duke of Newcastle's; and there are the hood and bells of my falcon Cheviot, who spitted himself on a heron's bill at Horsely Moss—poor Cheviot, there is not a bird on the perches below but are kites and rifiers compared to him!—and there is my own light fowling-piece, with an improved fire-lock; with twenty other treasures, each more valuable than another. And there, that speaks for itself.

She pointed to the carved oak frame of a full-length portrait by Vandyke, on which were inscribed in Gothic letters the words *Vernon semper viret*. I looked at her for explanation. 'Do you not know,' said she, with some surprise, 'our motto—the Vernon motto, where

Like the solemn vice Iniquity,
We moralise two meanings in one word?

And do you not know our cognizance, the pipes?' pointing to the armorial bearings sculptured on the oaken scutcheon, around which the legend was displayed.

'Pipes! they look more like penny-whistles. But, pray, do not be angry with my ignorance,' I continued, observing the colour mount to her cheeks, 'I can mean no affront to your armorial bearings, for I do not even know my own.'

'You an Osbaldistone, and confess so much!' she exclaimed. 'Why, Percie, Thornie, John, Dickon, Wilfred himself, might be your instructor. Even ignorance itself is a plummet over you.'

'With shame I confess it, my dear Miss Vernon, the mysteries couched under the grim hieroglyphics of heraldry are to me as unintelligible as those of the pyramids of Egypt.'

'What! is it possible? Why, even my uncle reads Gwillym sometimes of a winter night. Not know the figures of heraldry? of what could your father be thinking?'

'Of the figures of arithmetic,' I answered, 'the most insignificant unit of which he holds more highly than all the blazonry of chivalry. But, though I am ignorant to this inexpressible degree, I have knowledge and taste enough to admire that splendid picture, in which I think I can discover a family likeness to you. What ease and dignity in the attitude, what richness of colouring, what breadth and depth of shade!'

'Is it really a fine painting?' she asked.

'I have seen many works of the renowned artist,' I replied, 'but never beheld one more to my liking.'

'Well, I know as little of pictures as you do of heraldry,' replied Miss Vernon; 'yet I have the advantage of you, because I have always admired the painting without understanding its value.'

'While I have neglected pipes and tabors, and all the whimsical combinations of chivalry, still I am informed that they floated in the fields of ancient fame. But you will allow their exterior appearance is not so peculiarly interesting to the uninformed spectator as that of a fine painting. Who is the person here represented?'

'My grandfather; he shared the misfortunes of Charles I., and, I am sorry to add, the excesses of his son. Our patrimonial estate was greatly impaired by his prodigality, and was altogether lost by his successor, my unfortunate father. But peace be with them who have got it; it was lost in the cause of loyalty.'

'Your father, I presume, suffered in the political dissensions of the period?'

'He did indeed; he lost his all. And hence is his child a dependent orphan — eating the bread of others, subjected to their caprices, and compelled to study their inclinations. Yet prouder of having had such a father than if, playing a more prudent but less upright part, he had left me possessor of all the rich and fair baronies which his family once possessed.'

As she thus spoke, the entrance of the servants with dinner cut off all conversation but that of a general nature.

When our hasty meal was concluded, and the wine placed on the table, the domestic informed us, 'that Mr. Rashleigh had desired to be told when our dinner was removed.'

'Tell him,' said Miss Vernon, 'we shall be happy to see him if he will step this way; place another wine glass and chair and leave the room. You must retire with him when he goes away,' she continued, addressing herself to me; 'even *my* liberality cannot spare a gentleman above eight hours out of the twenty-four; and I think we have been together for at least that length of time.'

'The old scythe-man has moved so rapidly,' I answered, 'that I could not count his strides.'

'Hush!' said Miss Vernon, 'here comes Rashleigh'; and she drew off her chair, to which I had approached mine rather closely, so as to place a greater distance between us.

A modest tap at the door, a gentle manner of coming when invited to enter, a studied softness and humility of step

and deportment, announced that the education of Rashleigh Osbaldistone at the College of St. Omer's accorded well with the ideas I entertained of the manners of an accomplished Jesuit. I need not add that, as a sound Protestant, these ideas were not the most favourable. 'Why should you use the ceremony of knocking,' said Miss Vernon, 'when you knew that I was not alone?'

This was spoken with a burst of impatience, as if she had felt that Rashleigh's air of caution and reserve covered some insinuation of impertinent suspicion. 'You have taught me the form of knocking at this door so perfectly, my fair cousin,' answered Rashleigh, without change of voice or manner, 'that habit has become a second nature.'

'I prize sincerity more than courtesy, sir, and you know I do,' was Miss Vernon's reply.

'Courtesy is a gallant gay, a courtier by name and by profession,' replied Rashleigh, 'and therefore most fit for a lady's bower.'

'But Sincerity is the true knight,' retorted Miss Vernon, 'and therefore much more welcome, cousin. But, to end a debate not over amusing to your stranger kinsman, sit down, Rashleigh, and give Mr. Francis Osbaldistone your countenance to his glass of wine. I have done the honours of the dinner for the credit of Osbaldistone Hall.'

Rashleigh sat down and filled his glass, glancing his eye from Diana to me with an embarrassment which his utmost efforts could not entirely disguise. I thought he appeared to be uncertain concerning the extent of confidence she might have reposed in me, and hastened to lead the conversation into a channel which should sweep away his suspicion that Diana might have betrayed any secrets which rested between them. 'Miss Vernon,' I said, 'Mr. Rashleigh, has recommended me to return my thanks to you for my speedy disengagement from the ridiculous accusation of Morris; and, unjustly fearing my gratitude might not be warm enough to remind me of this duty, she has put my curiosity on its side by referring me to you for an account, or rather explanation, of the events of the day.'

'Indeed?' answered Rashleigh. 'I should have thought (looking keenly at Miss Vernon) that the lady herself might have stood interpreter'; and his eye, reverting from her face, sought mine, as if to search, from the expression of my features, whether Diana's communication had been as narrowly limited

as my words had intimated. Miss Vernon retorted his inquisitorial glance with one of decided scorn; while I, uncertain whether to deprecate or resent his obvious suspicion, replied, 'If it is your pleasure, Mr. Rashleigh, as it has been Miss Vernon's, to leave me in ignorance, I must necessarily submit; but pray do not withhold your information from me on the ground of imagining that I have already obtained any on the subject. For I tell you, as a man of honour, I am as ignorant as that picture of anything relating to the events I have witnessed to-day, excepting that I understand from Miss Vernon that you have been kindly active in my favour.'

'Miss Vernon has overrated my humble efforts,' said Rashleigh, 'though I claim full credit for my zeal. The truth is that, as I galloped back to get some one of our family to join me in becoming your bail, which was the most obvious, or, indeed, I may say, the only way of serving you which occurred to my stupidity, I met the man Cawmil — Colville — Campbell, or whatsoever they call him. I had understood from Morris that he was present when the robbery took place, and had the good fortune to prevail on him — with some difficulty, I confess — to tender his evidence in your exculpation, which I presume was the means of your being released from an unpleasant situation.'

'Indeed? I am much your debtor for procuring such a seasonable evidence in my behalf. But I cannot see why — having been, as he said, a fellow-sufferer with Morris — it should have required much trouble to persuade him to step forth and bear evidence, whether to convict the actual robber or free an innocent person.'

'You do not know the genius of that man's country, sir,' answered Rashleigh. 'Discretion, prudence, and foresight are their leading qualities; these are only modified by a narrow-spirited but yet ardent patriotism, which forms, as it were, the outmost of the concentric bulwarks with which a Scotchman fortifies himself against all the attacks of a generous philanthropical principle. Surmount this mound, you find an inner and still dearer barrier — the love of his province, his village, or, most probably, his clan; storn this second obstacle, you have a third — his attachment to his own family — his father, mother, sons, daughters, uncles, aunts, and cousins to the ninth generation. It is within these limits that a Scotchman's social affection expands itself, never reaching those which are outermost till all means of discharging itself in the interior circles have been exhausted. It is within these circles that his heart

throbs, each pulsation being fainter and fainter, till, beyond the widest boundary, it is almost unfelt. And what is worst of all, could you surmount all these concentric outworks, you have an inner citadel, deeper, higher, and more efficient than them all — a Scotchman's love for himself.

'All this is extremely eloquent and metaphorical, Rashleigh,' said Miss Vernon, who listened with unrepressed impatience; 'there are only two objections to it: first, it is *not* true; secondly, if true, it is nothing to the purpose.'

'It *is* true, my fairest Diana,' returned Rashleigh; 'and, moreover, it is most instantly to the purpose. It is true, because you cannot deny that I know the country and people intimately, and the character is drawn from deep and accurate consideration; and it is to the purpose, because it answers Mr. Francis Osbaldistone's question, and shows why this same wary Scotchman, considering our kinsman to be neither his countryman nor a Campbell, nor his cousin in any of the inextricable combinations by which they extend their pedigree; and, above all, seeing no prospect of personal advantage, but, on the contrary, much hazard of loss of time and delay of business —'

'With other inconveniences, perhaps, of a nature yet more formidable,' interrupted Miss Vernon.

'Of which, doubtless, there might be many,' said Rashleigh, continuing in the same tone. 'In short, my theory shows why this man, hoping for no advantage, and afraid of some inconvenience, might require a degree of persuasion ere he could be prevailed on to give his testimony in favour of Mr. Osbaldistone.'

'It seems surprising to me,' I observed, 'that during the glance I cast over the declaration, or whatever it is termed, of Mr. Morris, he should never have mentioned that Campbell was in his company when he met the marauders.'

'I understood from Campbell that he had taken his solemn promise not to mention that circumstance,' replied Rashleigh; 'his reason for exacting such an engagement you may guess from what I have hinted: he wished to get back to his own country, undelayed and unembarrassed by any of the judicial inquiries which he would have been under the necessity of attending had the fact of his being present at the robbery taken air while he was on this side of the Border. But let him once be as distant as the Forth, Morris will, I warrant you, come forth with all he knows about him, and, it may be, a good deal more. Besides, Campbell is a very extensive dealer in cattle, and has often occasion to send great droves into North-

umberland; and, when driving such a trade, he would be a great fool to embroil himself with our Northumbrian thieves, than whom no men who live are more vindictive.'

'I dare be sworn of that,' said Miss Vernon, with a tone which implied something more than a simple acquiescence in the proposition.

'Still,' said I, resuming the subject, 'allowing the force of the reasons which Campbell might have for desiring that Morris should be silent with regard to his promise when the robbery was committed, I cannot see how he could attain such an influence over the man as to enable him suppress his evidence in that particular at the manifest risk of subjecting his story to discredit.'

Rashleigh agreed with me, but was very extraordinary, and seemed to regret that he had not mentioned the Scotchman more closely on that subject, which he now looked extremely mysterious. 'But,' he asked, immediately after this acquiescence, 'are you very sure the circumstance of Morris's being accompanied by Campbell is really not alluded to in his examination?'

'I read the paper over hastily,' said I, 'but it is my strong impression that no such circumstance is mentioned; at least it must have been touched on very slightly, since it failed to catch my attention.'

'True, true,' answered Rashleigh, forming his own inference while he adopted my words: 'I incline to think with you that the circumstance must in reality have been mentioned, but so slightly that it failed to attract your attention. And then as to Campbell's interest with Morris, I incline to suppose that it must have been gained by playing upon his fears. This chicken-hearted fellow, Morris, is bound, I understand, for Scotland, destined for some little employment under government; and, possessing the courage of the wrathful dove or most magnanimous mouse, he may have been afraid to encounter the ill-will of such a kill-cow as Campbell, whose very appearance would be enough to fright him out of his little wits. You observed that Mr. Campbell has at times a keen and animated manner — something of a martial cast in his tone and bearing?'

'I own,' I replied, 'that his expression struck me as being occasionally fierce and sinister, and little adapted to his peaceable professions. Has he served in the army?'

'Yes — no — not, strictly speaking, served; but he has been, I believe, like most of his countrymen, trained to arms. Indeed,

among the hills they carry them from boyhood to the grave. So, if you know anything of your fellow-traveller, you will easily judge that, going to such a country, he will take care to avoid a quarrel, if he can help it, with any of the natives. But come, I see you decline your wine, and I too am a degenerate Osbaldistone so far as respects the circulation of the bottle. If you will go to my room I will hold you a hand at piquet.'

We rose to take leave of Miss Vernon, who had from time to time suppressed, apparently with difficulty, a strong temptation to break in upon Rashleigh's details. As we were about to leave the room the smothered fire broke forth.

'Mr. Osbaldistone,' she said, 'your own observation will enable you to verify the justice or injustice of Rashleigh's suggestions concerning such individuals as Mr. Campbell and Mr. Morris; but in slandering Scotland he has borne false witness against a whole country, and I request you will allow no weight to his evidence.'

'Perhaps,' I answered, 'I may find it somewhat difficult to obey your injunction, Miss Vernon; for I must own I was bred up with no very favourable idea of our northern neighbours.'

'Distrust that part of your education, sir,' she replied, 'and let the daughter of a Scotchwoman pray you to respect the land which gave her parent birth until your own observation has proved them to be unworthy of your good opinion. Preserve your hatred and contempt for dissimulation, baseness, and falsehood where-soever they are to be met with. You will find enough of all without leaving England. Adieu, gentlemen; I wish you good evening.'

And she signed to the door with the manner of a princess dismissing her train.

We retired to Rashleigh's apartment, where a servant brought us coffee and cards. I had formed my resolution to press Rashleigh no farther on the events of the day. A mystery, and, as I thought, not of a favourable complexion, appeared to hang over his conduct; but to ascertain if my suspicions were just it was necessary to throw him off his guard. We cut for the deal and were soon earnestly engaged in our play. I thought I perceived in this trifling for amusement (to the stake which Rashleigh proposed was a mere trifle) something of a fierce and ambitious temper. He seemed perfectly to understand the beautiful game at which he played, but preferred, as it were on principle, the risking bold and precarious

strokes to the ordinary rules of play ; and, neglecting the minor and better-balanced chances of the game, he hazarded everything for the chance of piqueing, repiqueing, or capoting his adversary. So soon as the intervention of a game or two at piquet, like the music between the acts of a drama, had completely interrupted our previous course of conversation, Rashleigh appeared to tire of the game, and the cards were superseded by discourse, in which he assumed the lead.

More learned than soundly wise, better acquainted with men's minds than with the moral principles that ought to regulate them, he had still powers of conversation which I have rarely seen equalled, never excelled. Of this his manner implied some consciousness ; at least it appeared to me that he had studied hard to improve his natural advantages of a melodious voice, fluent and happy expression, apt language, and fervid imagination. He was never loud, never overbearing, never so much occupied with his own thoughts as to outrun either the patience or the comprehension of those he conversed with. His ideas succeeded each other with the gentle but unintermitting flow of a plentiful and bounteous spring ; while I have heard those of others who aimed at distinction in conversation rush along like the turbid gush from the sluice of a mill-pond, as hurried and as easily exhausted. It was late at night ere I could part from a companion so fascinating ; and when I gained my own apartment it cost me no small effort to recall to my mind the character of Rashleigh, such as I had pictured him previous to this *tête-à-tête*.

So effectual, my dear Tresham, does the sense of being pleased and amused blunt our faculties of perception and discrimination of character, that I can only compare it to the taste of certain fruits, at once luscious and poignant, which renders our palate totally unfit for relishing or distinguishing the viands which are subsequently subjected to its criticism.

CHAPTER XI

What gars ye gaunt, my merry-men a' ?
What gars ye look sae dreary ?
What gars ye hing your head sae sair
In the castle of Balwearie ?

Old Scotch Ballad.

THE next morning chanced to be Sunday, a day peculiarly hard to be got rid of at Osbaldistone Hall ; for, after the formal religious service of the morning had been performed, at which all the family regularly attended, it was hard to say upon which individual, Rashleigh and Miss Vernon excepted, the fiend of *ennui* descended with the most abundant outpouring of his spirit. To speak of my yesterday's embarrassment amused Sir Hildebrand for several minutes, and he congratulated me on my deliverance from Morpeth or Hexham jail, as he would have done if I had fallen in attempting to clear a five-barred gate and got up without hurting myself.

'Hast had a lucky turn, lad ; but do na be over-venturous again. What, man ! the king's road is free to all men, be they Whigs, be they Tories.'

'On my word, sir, I am innocent of interrupting it ; and it is the most provoking thing on earth that every person will take it for granted that I am accessory to a crime which I despise and detest, and which would, moreover, deservedly forfeit my life to the laws of my country.'

'Well, well, lad, even so be it. I ask no questions ; no man bound to tell on himsell ; that's fair play, or the devil's in 't.'

Rashleigh here came to my assistance ; but I could not help thinking that his arguments were calculated rather as hints to his father to put on a show of acquiescence in my declaration of innocence than fully to establish it.

'In your own house, my dear sir, and your own nephew — you will not surely persist in hurting his feelings by seeming to discredit what he is so strongly interested in affirming. No

doubt you are fully deserving of all his confidence, and I am sure, were there anything you could do to assist him in this strange affair, he would have recourse to your goodness. But my cousin Frank has been dismissed as an innocent man, and no one is entitled to suppose him otherwise. For my part, I have not the least doubt of his innocence; and our family honour, I conceive, requires that we should maintain it with tongue and sword against the whole country.'

'Rashleigh,' said his father, looking fixedly at him, 'thou art a sly loon: thou hast ever been too cunning for me, and too cunning for most folks. Have a care thou provena too cunning for thyself; two faces under one hood is no true heraldry. And since we talk of heraldry, I'll go and read Gwilym.'

This resolution he intimated with a yawn, resistless as that of the Goddess in the *Dunciad*, which was responsively echoed by his giant sons as they dispersed in quest of the pastimes to which their minds severally inclined them — Percie to discuss a pot of March beer with the steward in the buttery; Thorncliff to cut a pair of cudgels and fix them in their wicker hilts; John to dress May-flies; Dickon to play at pitch-and-toss by himself, his right hand against his left; and Wilfred to bite his thumbs and hum himself into a slumber which should last till dinner time, if possible. Miss Vernen had retired to the library.

Rashleigh and I were left alone in the old hall, from which the servants, with their usual bustle and awkwardness, had at length contrived to hurry the remains of our substantial breakfast. I took the opportunity to upbraid him with the manner in which he had spoken of my affair to his father, which I frankly stated was highly offensive to me, as it seemed rather to exhort Sir Hildebrand to conceal his suspicions than to root them out.

'Why, what can I do, my dear friend?' replied Rashleigh; 'my father's disposition is so tenacious of suspicions of all kinds when once they take root, which, to do him justice, does not easily happen, that I have always found it the best way to silence him upon such subjects, instead of arguing with him. Thus I get the better of the weeds which I cannot eradicate by cutting them over as often as they appear, until at length they die away of themselves. There is neither wisdom nor profit in disputing with such a mind as Sir Hildebrand's, which hardens itself against conviction, and believes in its own inspirations as firmly as we good Catholics do in those of the Holy Father of Rome.'

'It is very hard, though, that I should live in the house of

a man, and he a near relation too, who will persist in believing me guilty of a highway robbery.'

'My father's foolish opinion, if one may give that epithet to any opinion of a father's, does not affect your real innocence; and as to the disgrace of the fact, depend on it that, considered in all its bearings, political as well as moral, Sir Hildebrand regards it as a meritorious action — a weakening of the enemy, a spoiling of the Amalekites — and you will stand the higher in his regard for your supposed accession to it.'

'I desire no man's regard, Mr. Rashleigh, on such terms as must sink me in my own; and I think these injurious suspicions will afford a very good reason for quitting Osbaldistone Hall, which I shall do whenever I can communicate on the subject with my father.'

The dark countenance of Rashleigh, though little accustomed to betray its master's feelings, exhibited a suppressed smile, which he instantly chastened by a sigh.

'You are a happy man, Frank; you go and come, as the wind bloweth where it listeth. With your address, taste, and talents you will soon find circles where they will be more valued than amid the dull inmates of this mansion; while I —' he paused.

'And what is there in your lot that can make you or any one envy mine — an outcast, as I may almost term myself, from my father's house and favour?'

'Ay, but,' answered Rashleigh, 'consider the gratified sense of independence which you must have attained by a very temporary sacrifice, for such I am sure yours will prove to be consider the power of acting as a free agent, of cultivating your own talents in the way to which your taste determines you, and in which you are well qualified to distinguish yourself. Fame and freedom are cheaply purchased by a few weeks' residence in the North, even though your place of exile be Osbaldistone Hall. A second Ovid in Thrace, you have not his reasons for writing *Tristia*.'

'I do not know,' said I, blushing as became a young scribbler, how you should be so well acquainted with my truant studies.'

'There was an emissary of your father's here some time since, a young coxcomb, one Twineall, who informed me concerning your secret sacrifices to the Muses, and added, that some of your verses had been greatly admired by the best judges.'

Tresham, I believe you are guiltless of having ever essayed to build the lofty rhyme; but you must have known in your

day many an apprentice and fellow-craft, if not some of the master-masons, in the temple of Apollo. Vanity is their universal foible, from him who decorated the shades of Twickenham to the veriest scribbler whom he has lashed in his *Dunciad*. I had my own share of this common failing, and, without considering how little likely this young fellow Twineall was by taste and habits either to be acquainted with one or two little pieces of poetry which I had at times insinuated into Button's coffee-house, or to report the opinion of the critics who frequented that resort of wit and literature, I almost instantly gorged the bait; which Rashleigh perceiving, improved his opportunity by a diffident, yet apparently very anxious, request to be permitted to see some of my manuscript productions.

'You shall give me an evening in my own apartment,' he continued; 'for I must soon lose the charms of literary society for the drudgery of commerce and the coarse every-day avocations of the world. I repeat it, that my compliance with my father's wishes for the advantage of my family is indeed a sacrifice, especially considering the calm and peaceful profession to which my education destined me.'

I was vain, but not a fool, and this hypocrisy was too strong for me to swallow. 'You would not persuade me,' I replied, 'that you really regret to exchange the situation of an obscure Catholic priest, with all its privations, for wealth and society and the pleasures of the world?'

Rashleigh saw that he had coloured his affectation of moderation too highly, and after a second's pause, during which, I suppose, he calculated the degree of candour which it was necessary to use with me (that being a quality of which he was never needlessly profuse), he answered with a smile — 'At my age, to be condemned, as you say, to wealth and the world, does not, indeed, sound so alarming as perhaps it ought to do. But, with pardon be it spoken, you have mistaken my destination — a Catholic priest, if you will, but not an obscure one. No, sir, Rashleigh Osbaldistone will be more obscure, should he rise to be the richest citizen in London, than he might have been as a member of a church whose ministers, as some one says, "set their sandall'd feet on princes." My family interest at a certain exiled court is high, and the weight which that court ought to possess, and does possess, at Rome is yet higher — my talents not altogether inferior to the education I have received. In sober judgment, I might have looked forward to high eminence in the church; in the dream of fancy, to the

very highest. Why might not,' he added, laughing, for it was part of his manner to keep much of his discourse apparently betwixt jest and earnest — 'why might not Cardinal Osbaldistone have swayed the fortunes of empires, well-born and well-connected, as well as the low-born Mazarin, or Alberoni, the son of an Italian gardener?'

'Nay, I can give you no reason to the contrary; but in your place I should not much regret losing the chance of such precarious and invidious elevation.'

'Neither would I,' he replied, 'were I sure that my present establishment was more certain; but that must depend upon circumstances, which I can only learn by experience — the disposition of your father, for example.'

'Confess the truth without finesse, Rashleigh: you would willingly know something of him from me?'

'Since, like Die Vernon, you make a point of following the banner of the good knight Sincerity, I reply — certainly.'

'Well, then, you will find in my father a man who has followed the paths of thriving more for the exercise they afforded to his talents than for the love of the gold with which they are strewed. His active mind would have been happy in any situation which gave it scope for exertion, though that exertion had been its sole reward. But his wealth has accumulated because, moderate and frugal in his habits, no new sources of expense have occurred to dispose of his increasing income. He is a man who hates dissimulation in others, never practises it himself, and is peculiarly alert in discovering motives though the colouring of language. Himself silent by habit, he is readily disgusted by great talkers, the rather that the circumstances by which he is most interested afford no great scope for conversation. He is severely strict in the duties of religion; but you have no reason to fear his interference with yours, for he regards toleration as a sacred principle of political economy. But if you have any Jacobitical partialities, as is naturally to be supposed, you will do well to suppress them in his presence, as well as the least tendency to the high-flying or Tory principles; for he holds both in utter detestation. For the rest, his word is his own bond, and must be the law of all who act under him. He will fail in his duty to no one, and will permit no one to fail towards him; to cultivate his favour, you must execute his commands, instead of echoing his sentiments. His greatest failings arise out of prejudices connected with his own profession, or rather his exclusive devotion to it, which makes him see little worthy

of praise or attention unless it be in some measure connected with commerce.'

'O rare-painted portrait!' exclaimed Rashleigh, when I was silent. 'Vandyke was a dauber to you, Frank. I see thy sire before me in all his strength and weakness — loving and honouring the King as a sort of lord mayor of the empire, or chief of the Board of Trade; venerating the Commons, for the acts regulating the export trade; and respecting the Peers, because the Lord Chancellor sits on a wool-sack.'

'Mine was a likeness, Rashleigh; yours is a caricature. But in return for the *carte du pays* which I have unfolded to you, give me some lights on the geography of the unknown lands —'

'On which you are wrecked,' said Rashleigh. 'It is not worth while: it is no Isle of Calypso, unbrageous with shade and intricate with silvan labyrinth; but a bare ragged Northumbrian moor, with as little to interest curiosity as to delight the eye. You may descry it in all its nakedness in half an hour's survey, as well as if I were to lay it down before you by line and compass.'

'O, but something there is worthy a more attentive survey. What say you to Miss Vernon? Does not she form an interesting object in the landscape, were all round as rude as Iceland's coast?'

I could plainly perceive that Rashleigh disliked the topic now presented to him; but my frank communication had given me the advantageous title to make inquiries in my turn. Rashleigh felt this, and found himself obliged to follow my lead, however difficult he might find it to play his cards successfully. 'I have known less of Miss Vernon,' he said, 'for some time than I was wont to do formerly. In early age I was her tutor; but, as she advanced towards womanhood, my various avocations, the gravity of the profession to which I was destined, the peculiar nature of her engagements — our mutual situation, in short, rendered a close and constant intimacy dangerous and improper. I believe Miss Vernon might consider my reserve as unkindness, but it was my duty; I felt as much as she seemed to do when compelled to give way to prudence. But where was the safety in cultivating an intimacy with a beautiful and susceptible girl, whose heart, you are aware, must be given either to the cloister or to a betrothed husband?'

'The cloister or a betrothed husband!' I echoed; 'is that the alternative destined for Miss Vernon?'

'It is indeed,' said Rashleigh, with a sigh. 'I need not, I suppose, caution you against the danger of cultivating too closely the friendship of Miss Vernon; you are a man of the world, and know how far you can indulge yourself in her society with safety to yourself and justice to her. But I warn you that, considering her ardent temper, you must let your experience keep guard over her as well as yourself, for the specimen of yesterday may serve to show her extreme thoughtlessness and neglect of decorum.'

There was something, I was sensible, of truth as well as good sense in all this; it seemed to be given as a friendly warning, and I had no right to take it amiss; yet I felt I could with pleasure have run Rashleigh Osbaldistone through the body all the time he was speaking.

'The deuce take his insolence!' was my internal meditation. 'Would he wish me to infer that Miss Vernon had fallen in love with that hatchet-face of his, and become degraded so low as to require his shyness to cure her of an imprudent passion? I will have his meaning from him,' was my resolution, 'if I should drag it out with cart-ropes.'

For this purpose I placed my temper under as accurate a guard as I could, and observed, 'That, for a lady of her good sense and acquired accomplishments, it was to be regretted that Miss Vernon's manners were rather blunt and rustic.'

'Frank and unreserved, at least, to the extreme,' replied Rashleigh; 'yet, trust me, she has an excellent heart. To tell you the truth, should she continue her extreme aversion to the cloister and to her destined husband, and should my own labours in the mine of Plutus promise to secure me a decent independence, I shall think of renewing our acquaintance and sharing it with Miss Vernon.'

'With all his fine voice and well-turned periods,' thought I, 'this same Rashleigh Osbaldistone is the ugliest and most conceited coxcomb I ever met with.'

'But,' continued Rashleigh, as if thinking aloud, 'I should not like to supplant Thorncliff.'

'Supplant Thorncliff! Is your brother Thorncliff,' I inquired, with great surprise, 'the destined husband of Diana Vernon?'

'Why, ay; her father's commands, and a certain family contract, destine her to marry one of Sir Hildebrand's sons. A dispensation has been obtained from Rome to Diana Vernon to marry "Blank" Osbaldistone, Esq., son of Sir Hildebrand Osbaldistone of Osbaldistone Hall, Bart., and so forth; and it only

remains to pitch upon the happy man whose name shall fill the gap in the manuscript. Now, as Percy is seldom sober, my father pitched on Thorncliff as the second prop of the family, and therefore most proper to carry on the line of the Osbaldistones.'

'The young lady,' said I, forcing myself to assume an air of pleasantry, which, I believe, became me extremely ill, 'would perhaps have been inclined to look a little lower on the family tree for the branch to which she was desirous of clinging.'

'I cannot say,' he replied. 'There is room for little choice in our family: Dick is a gambler, John a boor, and Wilfred an ass. I believe my father really made the best selection for poor Die after all.'

'The present company,' said I, 'being always excepted.'

'O, my destination to the church placed me out of the question; otherwise I will not affect to say that, qualified by my education both to instruct and guide Miss Vernon, I might not have been a more creditable choice than any of my elders.'

'And so thought the young lady, doubtless?'

'You are not to suppose so,' answered Rashleigh, with an affectation of denial which was contrived to convey the strongest affirmation the case admitted of. 'Friendship—only friendship—formed the tie betwixt us, and the tender affection of an opening mind to its only instructor. Love came not near us; I told you I was wise in time.'

I felt little inclination to pursue this conversation any farther, and, shaking myself clear of Rashleigh, withdrew to my own apartment, which, I recollect, I traversed with much vehemence of agitation, repeating aloud the expressions which had most offended me. 'Susceptible—ardent—tender affection—love! Diana Vernon, the most beautiful creature I ever beheld, in love with him, the bandy-legged, bull-necked, limping scoundrel! Richard the Third in all but his hump-back! And yet the opportunities he must have had during his cursed course of lectures; and the fellow's flowing and easy strain of sentiment; and her extreme seclusion from every one who spoke and acted with common sense; ay, and her obvious pique at him, mixed with admiration of his talents, which looked as like the result of neglected attachment as anything else. Well, and what is it to me that I should storm and rage at it? Is Diana Vernon the first pretty girl that has loved or married an ugly fellow? And if she were free of every Osbaldistone of them,

what concern is it of mine ? A Catholic, a Jacobite, a termagant into the boot ; for me to look that way were utter madness.

By throwing such reflections on the flame of my displeasure, I subdued it into a sort of smouldering heart-burning, and appeared at the dinner-table in as sulky a humour as could well be imagined.

CHAPTER XII

Drunk? — and speak parrot? — and squabble? — swagger? —
Swear? — and discourse fustian with one's own shadow?

OTHELLO.

I HAVE already told you, my dear Tresham, what probably was no news to you, that my principal fault was an unconquerable pitch of pride, which exposed me to frequent mortification. I had not even whispered to myself that I loved Diana Vernon; yet no sooner did I hear Rashleigh talk of her as a prize which he might stoop to carry off or neglect at his pleasure than every step which the poor girl had taken, in the innocence and openness of her heart, to form a sort of friendship with me seemed in my eyes the most insulting coquetry. 'Soh! she would secure me as a *pis aller*, I suppose, in case Mr. Rashleigh Osbaldistone should not take compassion upon her! but I will satisfy her that I am not a person to be trepanned in that manner; I will make her sensible that I see through her arts, and that I scorn them.'

I did not reflect for a moment that all this indignation, which I had no right whatever to entertain, proved that I was anything but indifferent to Miss Vernon's charms; and I ate down to table in high ill-humour with her and all the daughters of Eve.

Miss Vernon heard me, with surprise, return ungracious answers to one or two playful strokes of satire which she threw out with her usual freedom of speech; but, having no suspicion that offence was meant, she only replied to my rude repartees with jests somewhat similar, but polished by her good temper, though pointed by her wit. At length she perceived I was really out of humour, and answered one of my rude speeches thus: 'They say, Mr. Frank, that one may gather sense from fools: I heard cousin Wilfred refuse to play any longer at cudgels the other day with cousin Thornie, because cousin Thornie got angry and struck harder than the rules of amicable combat, it

seems, permitted. "Were I to break your head in good earnest," quoth honest Wilfred, "I care not how angry you are, for I should do it so much the more easily; but it's hard I should get raps over the costard and only pay you back in make believes." Do you understand the moral of this, Frank?

'I have never felt myself under the necessity, madam, of studying how to extract the slender portion of sense with which this family season their conversation.'

'Necessity! and madam! You surprise me, Mr. Osbaldistone.'

'I am unfortunate in doing so.'

'Am I to suppose that this capricious tone is serious, or is it only assumed to make your good-humour more valuable?'

'You have a right to the attention of so many gentlemen in this family, Miss Vernon, that it cannot be worth your while to inquire into the cause of my stupidity and bad spirits.'

'What!' she said, 'am I to understand, then, that you have deserted my faction and gone over to the enemy?'

Then, looking across the table and observing that Rashleigh, who was seated opposite, was watching us with a singular expression of interest on his harsh features, she continued,

'Horrible thought! Ay, now I see 't is true,
For the grim-visaged Rashleigh smiles on me,
And points at thee for his!'

Well, thank Heaven and the unprotected state which has taught me endurance, I do not take offence easily; and that I may not be forced to quarrel, whether I like it or no, I have the honour, earlier than usual, to wish you a happy digestion of your dinner and your bad humour.'

And she left the table accordingly.

Upon Miss Vernon's departure I found myself very little satisfied with my own conduct. I had hurled back offered kindness, of which circumstances had but lately pointed out the honest sincerity, and I had but just stopped short of insulting the beautiful, and, as she had said with some emphasis, the unprotected being by whom it was proffered. My conduct seemed brutal in my own eyes. To combat or drown these painful reflections I applied myself more frequently than usual to the wine which circulated on the table.

The agitated state of my feelings combined with my habits of temperance to give rapid effect to the beverage. Habitual toppers, I believe, acquire the power of soaking themselves with

a quantity of liquor that does little more than muddy those intellects which, in their sober state, are none of the clearest; but men who are strangers to the vice of drunkenness as a habit are more powerfully acted upon by intoxicating liquors. My spirits, once aroused, became extravagant; I talked a great deal, argued upon what I knew nothing of, told stories of which I forgot the point, then laughed immoderately at my own forgetfulness; I accepted several bets without having the least judgment; I challenged the giant John to wrestle with me, although he had kept the ring at Hexham for a year and I never tried so much as a single fall.

My uncle had the goodness to interpose and prevent this consummation of drunken folly, which, I suppose, would have otherwise ended in my neck being broken.

It has even been reported by maligners that I sung a song while under this vinous influence; but, as I remember nothing of it, and never attempted to turn a tune in all my life before or since, I would willingly hope there is no actual foundation for the calumny. I was absurd enough without this exaggeration. Without positively losing my senses, I speedily lost all command of my temper, and my impetuous passions whirled me onward at their pleasure. I had sate down sulky and discontented, and disposed to be silent; the wine rendered me loquacious, disputatious, and quarrelsome. I contradicted whatever was asserted, and attacked, without any respect to my uncle's table, both his politics and his religion. The affected moderation of Rashleigh, which he well knew how to qualify with irritating ingredients, was even more provoking to me than the noisy and bullying language of his obstreperous brothers. My uncle, to do him justice, endeavoured to bring us to order; but his authority was lost amidst the tumult of wine and passion. At length, frantic at some real or supposed injurious insinuation, I actually struck Rashleigh with my fist. No Stoic philosopher, superior to his own passion and that of others, could have received an insult with a higher degree of scorn. What he himself did not think it apparently worth while to resent, Thorncliff resented for him. Swords were drawn and we exchanged one or two passes, when the other brothers separated us by main force; and I shall never forget the diabolical sneer which writhed Rashleigh's wayward features as I was forced from the apartment by the main strength of two of these youthful Titans. They secured me in my apartment by locking the door, and I heard them, to my inexpress-

ible rage, laugh heartily as they descended the stairs. I essayed in my fury to break out ; but the window-grates and the strength of a door clenched with iron resisted my efforts. At length I threw myself on my bed, and fell asleep amidst vows of dire revenge to be taken in the ensuing day.

But with the morning cool repentance came. I felt in the keenest manner the violence and absurdity of my conduct, and was obliged to confess that wine and passion had lowered my intellects even below those of Wilfred Osbaldistone, whom I held in so much contempt. My uncomfortable reflections were by no means soothed by meditating the necessity of an apology for my improper behaviour, and recollecting that Miss Vernon must be a witness of my submission. The impropriety and unkindness of my conduct to her personally added not a little to these galling considerations, and for this I could not even plead the miserable excuse of intoxication.

Under all these aggravating feelings of shame and degradation I descended to the breakfast-hall, like a criminal to receive sentence. It chanced that a hard frost had rendered it impossible to take out the hounds, so that I had the additional mortification to meet the family, excepting only Rashleigh and Miss Vernon, in full divan, surrounding the cold venison-pasty and chine of beef. They were in high glee as I entered, and I could easily imagine that the jests were furnished at my expense. In fact, what I was disposed to consider with serious pain was regarded as an excellent good joke by my uncle and the greater part of my cousins. Sir Hildebrand, while he rallied me on the exploits of the preceding evening, swore he thought a young fellow had better be thrice drunk in one day than sneak sober to bed like a Presbyterian and leave a batch of honest fellows and a double quart of claret. And, to back this consolatory speech, he poured out a large bumper of brandy, exhorting me to swallow 'a hair of the dog that had bit me.'

'Never mind these lads laughing, nevoy,' he continued ; 'they would have been all as great milksops as yourself had I not nursed them, as one may say, on the toast and tankard.'

Ill-nature was not the fault of my cousins in general ; they saw I was vexed and hurt at the recollections of the preceding evening, and endeavoured, with clumsy kindness, to remove the painful impression they had made on me. Thorncliff alone looked sullen and unreconciled. This young man had

never liked me from the beginning; and in the marks of attention occasionally shown me by his brothers, awkward as they were, he alone had never joined. If it was true, of which, however, I began to have my doubts, that he was considered by the family, or regarded himself, as the destined husband of Miss Vernon, a sentiment of jealousy might have sprung up in his mind from the marked predilection which it was that young lady's pleasure to show for one whom Thorncliff might, perhaps, think likely to become a dangerous rival.

Rashleigh at last entered, his visage as dark as mourning weed, brooding, I could not but doubt, over the unjustifiable and disgraceful insult I had offered to him. I had already settled in my own mind how I was to behave on the occasion, and had schooled myself to believe that true honour consisted not in defending, but in apologising for, an injury so much disproportioned to any provocation I might have to allege.

I therefore hastened to meet Rashleigh, and to express myself in the highest degree sorry for the violence with which I had acted on the preceding evening.

'No circumstances,' I said, 'could have wrung from me a single word of apology save my own consciousness of the impropriety of my behaviour. I hoped my cousin would accept of my regrets so sincerely offered, and consider how much of my misconduct was owing to the excessive hospitality of Osbaldistone Hall.'

'He shall be friends with thee, lad,' cried the honest knight, in the full effusion of his heart, 'or d—n me, if I call him son more! Why, Rashie, dost stand there like a log? "Sorry for it" is all a gentleman can say, if he happens to do anything awry, especially over his claret. I served in Hounslow, and should know something, I think, of affairs of honour. Let me hear no more of this, and we'll go in a body and rummage out the badger in Birkenwood Bank.'

Rashleigh's face resembled, as I have already noticed, no other countenance that I ever saw. But this singularity lay not only in the features, but in the mode of changing their expression. Other countenances, in altering from grief to joy, or from anger to satisfaction, pass through some brief interval ere the expression of the predominant passion supersedes entirely that of its predecessor. There is a sort of twilight, like that between the clearing up of the darkness and the rising of the sun, while the swollen muscles subside, the dark

eye clears, the forehead relaxes and expands itself, and the whole countenance loses its sterner shades and becomes serene and placid. Rashleigh's face exhibited none of these gradations, but changed almost instantaneously from the expression of one passion to that of the contrary. I can compare it to nothing but the sudden shifting of a scene in the theatre, where, at the whistle of the prompter, a cavern disappears and a grove arises.

My attention was strongly arrested by this peculiarity on the present occasion. At Rashleigh's first entrance, 'black he stood as night!' With the same inflexible countenance he heard my excuse and his father's exhortation; and it was not until Sir Hildebrand had done speaking that the cloud cleared away at once, and he expressed in the kindest and most civil terms his perfect satisfaction with the very handsome apology I had offered.

'Indeed,' he said, 'I have so poor a brain myself, when I impose on it the least burden beyond my usual three glasses, that I have only, like honest Cassio, a very vague recollection of the confusion of last night — remember a mass of things, but nothing distinctly — a quarrel, but nothing wherefore. So, my dear cousin,' he continued, shaking me kindly by the hand, 'conceive how much I am relieved by finding that I have to receive an apology, instead of having to make one. I will not have a word said upon the subject more; I should be very foolish to institute any scrutiny into an account when the balance, which I expected to be against me, has been so unexpectedly and agreeably struck in my favour. You see, Mr. Osbaldistone, I am practising the language of Lombard Street, and qualifying myself for my new calling.'

As I was about to answer, and raised my eyes for the purpose, they encountered those of Miss Vernon, who, having entered the room unobserved during the conversation, had given it her close attention. Abashed and confounded, I fixed my eyes on the ground, and made my escape to the breakfast-table, where I herded among my busy cousins.

My uncle, that the events of the preceding day might not pass out of our memory without a practical moral lesson, took occasion to give Rashleigh and me his serious advice to correct our milksop habits, as he termed them, and gradually to inure our brains to bear a gentlemanlike quantity of liquor without brawls or breaking of heads. He recommended that we should begin piddling with a regular quart of claret per day, which,

with the aid of March beer and brandy, made a handsome competence for a beginner in the art of toping. And, for our encouragement, he assured us that he had known many a man who had lived to our years without having drunk a pint of wine at a sitting, who yet, by falling into honest company and following hearty example, had afterwards been numbered among the best good fellows of the time, and could carry off their six bottles under their belt quietly and comfortably without brawling or babbling, and be neither sick nor sorry the next morning.

Sage as this advice was, and comfortable as was the prospect it held out to me, I profited but little by the exhortation; partly, perhaps, because, as often as I raised my eyes from the table, I observed Miss Vernon's looks fixed on me, in which I thought I could read grave compassion blended with regret and displeasure. I began to consider how I should seek a scene of explanation and apology with her also, when she gave me to understand she was determined to save me the trouble of soliciting an interview. 'Cousin Francis,' she said, addressing me by the same title she used to give to the other Osbaldistones, although I had, properly speaking, no title to be called her kinsman, 'I have encountered this morning a difficult passage in the *Divina Commedia* of Dante; will you have the goodness to step to the library and give me your assistance? And when you have unearthed for me the meaning of the obscure Florentine, we will join the rest at Birkenwood Bank, and see their luck at unearthing the badger.'

I signified, of course, my readiness to wait upon her. Rashleigh made an offer to accompany us. 'I am something better skilled,' he said, 'at tracking the sense of Dante through the metaphors and elisions of his wild and gloomy poem than at hunting the poor inoffensive hermit yonder out of his cave.'

'Pardon me, Rashleigh,' said Miss Vernon; 'but, as you are to occupy Mr. Francis's place in the counting-house, you must surrender to him the charge of your pupil's education at Osbaldistone Hall. We shall call you in, however, if there is any occasion; so pray do not look so grave upon it. Besides, it is a shame to you not to understand field-sports. What will you do should our uncle in Crane Alley ask you the signs by which you track a badger?'

'Ay, true, Die — true,' said Sir Hildebrand, with a sigh. 'I misdoubt Rashleigh will be found short at the leap when he is put to the trial. An he would ha' learned useful knowledge

like his brothers, he was bred up where it grew, I wuss ; but French antics and book-learning, with the new turnips and the rats and the Hanoverians, ha' changed the world that I ha' known in Old England. But come along with us, Rashie, and carry my hunting-staff, man ; thy cousin lacks none of thy company as now, and I wonna ha' Die crossed. It's ne'er be said there was but one woman in Osbaldistone Hall, and she died for lack of her will.'

Rashleigh followed his father, as he commanded, not, however, ere he had whispered to Diana, 'I suppose I must in discretion bring the courtier Ceremony in my company, and knock when I approach the door of the library?'

'No, no, Rashleigh,' said Miss Vernon ; 'dismiss from your company the false archimage Dissimulation, and it will better ensure your free access to our classical consultations.'

So saying, she led the way to the library, and I followed — like a criminal, I was going to say, to execution ; but, as I bethink me, I have used the simile once, if not twice, before. Without any simile at all, then, I followed, with a sense of awkward and conscious embarrassment which I would have given a great deal to shake off. I thought it a degrading and unworthy feeling to attend one on such an occasion, having breathed the air of the Continent long enough to have imbibed the notion that lightness, gallantry, and something approaching to well-bred self-assurance should distinguish the gentleman whom a fair lady selects for her companion in a *tête-à-tête*.

My English feelings, however, were too many for my French education, and I made, I believe, a very pitiful figure when Miss Vernon, seating herself majestically in a huge elbow-chair in the library, like a judge about to hear a cause of importance, signed to me to take a chair opposite to her (which I did, much like the poor fellow who is going to be tried), and entered upon conversation in a tone of bitter irony.

CHAPTER XIII

Dire was his thought, who first in poison steep'd
The weapon form'd for slaughter ; direr his,
And worthier of damnation, who instill'd
The mortal venom in the social cup,
To fill the veins with death instead of life.

Anonymous.

'UPON my word, Mr. Francis Osbaldistone,' said Miss Vernon, with the air of one who thought herself fully entitled to assume the privilege of ironical reproach which she was pleased to exert, 'your character improves upon us, sir ; I could not have thought that it was in you. Yesterday might be considered as your assay-piece, to prove yourself entitled to be free of the corporation of Osbaldistone Hall ; but it was a masterpiece.'

'I am quite sensible of my ill-breeding, Miss Vernon, and I can only say for myself that I had received some communications by which my spirits were unusually agitated. I am conscious I was impertinent and absurd.'

'You do yourself great injustice,' said the merciless monitor : 'you have contrived, by what I saw and have since heard, to exhibit in the course of one evening a happy display of all the various masterly qualifications which distinguish your several cousins — the gentle and generous temper of the benevolent Rashleigh, the temperance of Percie, the cool courage of Thorncliff, John's skill in dog-breaking, Dickon's aptitude to betting — all exhibited by the single individual Mr. Francis, and that with a selection of time, place, and circumstance worthy the taste and sagacity of the sapient Wilfred.'

'Have a little mercy, Miss Vernon,' said I, for I confess I thought the schooling as severe as the case merited, especially considering from what quarter it came, 'and forgive me if I suggest, as an excuse for follies I am not usually guilty of, the custom of this house and country. I am far from approving of it ; but we have Shakspeare's authority for saying that

good wine is a good familiar creature, and that any man living may be overtaken at some time.'

'Ay, Mr. Francis, but he places the panegyric and the apology in the mouth of the greatest villain his pencil has drawn. I will not, however, abuse the advantage your quotation has given me by overwhelming you with the refutation with which the victim Cassio replies to the tempter Iago. I only wish you to know that there is one person at least sorry to see a youth of talents and expectations sink into the slough in which the inhabitants of this house are nightly wallowing.'

'I have but wet my shoe, I assure you, Miss Vernon, and am too sensible of the filth of the puddle to step farther in.'

'If such be your resolution,' she replied, 'it is a wise one. But I was so much vexed at what I heard that your concerns have pressed before my own. You behaved to me yesterday during dinner as if something had been told you which lessened or lowered me in your opinion; I beg leave to ask you what it was?'

I was stupified; the direct bluntness of the demand was much in the style one gentleman uses to another, when requesting explanation of any part of his conduct in a good-humoured yet determined manner, and was totally devoid of the circumlocutions, shadings, softenings, and periphrasis which usually accompany explanations betwixt persons of different sexes in the higher orders of society.

I remained completely embarrassed; for it pressed on my recollection that Rashleigh's communications, supposing them to be correct, ought to have rendered Miss Vernon rather an object of my compassion than of my pettish resentment; and had they furnished the best apology possible for my own conduct, still I must have had the utmost difficulty in detailing what inferred such necessary and natural offence to Miss Vernon's feelings. She observed my hesitation, and proceeded in a tone somewhat more peremptory, but still temperate and civil.

'I hope Mr. Osbaldistone does not dispute my title to request this explanation. I have no relative who can protect me; it is, therefore, just that I be permitted to protect myself.'

I endeavoured with hesitation to throw the blame of my rude behaviour upon indisposition - upon disagreeable letters from London. She suffered me to exhaust my apologies, and fairly to run myself aground, listening all the while with a smile of absolute incredulity.

'And now, Mr. Francis, having gone through your prologue of excuses, with the same bad grace with which all prologues are delivered, please to draw the curtain and show me that which I desire to see. In a word, let me know what Rashleigh says of me; for he is the grand engineer and first mover of all the machinery of Osbaldistone Hall.'

'But, supposing there was anything to tell, Miss Vernon, what does he deserve that betrays the secrets of one ally to another? Rashleigh, you yourself told me, remained your ally though no longer your friend.'

'I have neither patience for evasion nor inclination for jesting on the present subject. Rashleigh cannot — ought not — dare not, hold any language respecting me, Diana Vernon, but what I may demand to hear repeated. That there are subjects of secrecy and confidence between us is most certain; but to such his communications to you could have no relation, and with such, I, as an individual, have no concern.'

I had by this time recovered my presence of mind, and hastily determined to avoid making any disclosure of what Rashleigh had told me in a sort of confidence. There was something unworthy in retailing private conversation; it could, I thought, do no good, and must necessarily give Miss Vernon great pain. I therefore replied, gravely, 'that nothing but frivolous talk had passed between Mr. Rashleigh Osbaldistone and me on the state of the family at the Hall; and I protested that nothing had been said which left a serious impression to her disadvantage. As a gentleman, I said, I could not be more explicit in reporting private conversation.'

She started up with the animation of a Camilla about to advance into battle. 'This shall not serve your turn, sir; I must have another answer from you.' Her features kindled, her brow became flushed, her eye glanced wild-fire as she proceeded: 'I demand such an explanation as a woman basely slandered has a right to demand from every man who calls himself a gentleman; as a creature, motherless, friendless, alone in the world, left to her own guidance and protection, has a right to require from every being having a happier lot, in the name of that God who sent *them* into the world to enjoy and *her* to suffer. You shall not deny me, or,' she added, looking solemnly upwards, 'you will rue your denial, if there is justice for wrong either on earth or in heaven.'

I was utterly astonished at her vehemence, but felt, thus conjured, that it became my duty to lay aside scrupulous

delicacy, and gave her briefly, but distinctly, the heads of the information which Rashleigh had conveyed to me.

She sate down and resumed her composure as soon as I entered upon the subject, and when I stopped to seek for the most delicate turn of expression, she repeatedly interrupted me with 'Go on — pray, go on ; the first word which occurs to you is the plainest, and must be the best. Do not think of my feelings, but speak as you would to an unconcerned third party.'

Thus urged and encouraged, I stammered through all the account which Rashleigh had given of her early contract to marry an Osbaldistone, and of the uncertainty and difficulty of her choice ; and there I would willingly have paused. But her penetration discovered that there was still something behind, and even guessed to what it related.

'Well, it was ill-natured of Rashleigh to tell this tale on me. I am like the poor girl in the fairy tale, who was betrothed in her cradle to the Black Bear of Norway, but complained chiefly of being called Bruin's bride by her companions at school. But besides all this, Rashleigh said something of himself with relation to me, did he not ?'

'He certainly hinted that, were it not for the idea of supplanting his brother, he would now, in consequence of his change of profession, be desirous that the word Rashleigh should fill up the blank in the dispensation, instead of the word Thorneliff.'

'Ay ? indeed ?' she replied ; 'was he so very condescending ? Too much honour for his humble handmaid, Diana Vernon. And she, I suppose, was to be enraptured with joy could such a substitute be effected ?'

'To confess the truth, he intimated as much, and even farther insinuated —'

'What ? Let me hear it all !' she exclaimed, hastily.

'That he had broken off your mutual intimacy lest it should have given rise to an affection by which his destination to the church would not permit him to profit.'

'I am obliged to him for his consideration,' replied Miss Vernon, every feature of her fine countenance taxed to express the most supreme degree of scorn and contempt. She paused a moment, and then said, with her usual composure, 'There is but little I have heard from you which I did not expect to hear, and which I ought not to have expected ; because, bating one circumstance, it is all very true. But, as there are some poisons so active that a few drops, it is said, will infect a

whole fountain, so there is one falsehood in Rashleigh's communication powerful enough to corrupt the whole well in which Truth herself is said to have dwelt. It is the leading and foul falsehood that, knowing Rashleigh as I have reason too well to know him, any circumstance on earth could make me think of sharing my lot with him. No,' she continued, with a sort of inward shuddering that seemed to express involuntary horror, 'any lot rather than that — the sot, the gambler, the bully, the jockey, the insensate fool were a thousand times preferable to Rashleigh; the convent, the jail, the grave shall be welcome before them all.'

There was a sad and melancholy cadence in her voice corresponding with the strange and interesting romance of her situation. So young, so beautiful, so untaught, so much abandoned to herself, and deprived of all the support which her sex derives from the countenance and protection of female friends, and even of that degree of defence which arises from the forms with which the sex are approached in civilised life — it is scarce metaphorical to say that my heart bled for her. Yet there was an expression of dignity in her contempt of ceremony, of upright feeling in her disdain of falsehood, of firm resolution in the manner in which she contemplated the dangers by which she was surrounded, which blended my pity with the warmest admiration. She seemed a princess deserted by her subjects and deprived of her power, yet still scorning those formal regulations of society which are created for persons of an inferior rank; and, amid her difficulties, relying boldly and confidently on the justice of Heaven and the unshaken constancy of her own mind.

I offered to express the mingled feelings of sympathy and admiration with which her unfortunate situation and her high spirit combined to impress me, but she imposed silence on me at once.

'I told you in jest,' she said, 'that I disliked compliments; I now tell you in earnest that I do not ask sympathy, and that I despise consolation. What I have borne, I have borne. What I am to bear, I will sustain as I may; no word of commiseration can make a burden feel one feather's weight lighter to the slave who must carry it. There is only one human being who could have assisted me, and that is he who has rather chosen to add to my embarrassment — Rashleigh Osbaldistone. Yes! the time once was that I might have learned to love that man. But, great God! the purpose for which he

insinuated himself into the confidence of one already so forlorn; the undeviating and continued assiduity with which he pursued that purpose from year to year, without one single momentary pause of remorse or compassion; the purpose for which he would have converted into poison the food he administered to my mind. Gracious Providence! what should I have been in this world and the next, in body and soul, had I fallen under the arts of this accomplished villain!

I was so much struck with the scene of perfidious treachery which these words disclosed, that I rose from my chair, hardly knowing what I did, laid my hand on the hilt of my sword, and was about to leave the apartment in search of him on whom I might discharge my just indignation. Almost breathless, and with eyes and looks in which scorn and indignation had given way to the most lively alarm, Miss Vernon threw herself between me and the door of the apartment.

'Stay,' she said — 'stay; however just your resentment, you do not know half the secrets of this fearful prison-house.' She then glanced her eyes anxiously round the room and sunk her voice almost to a whisper — 'He bears a charmed life; you cannot assail him without endangering other lives, and wider destruction. Had it been otherwise, in some hour of justice he had hardly been safe, even from this weak hand. I told you,' she said, motioning me back to my seat, 'that I needed no comforter; I now tell you, I need no avenger.'

I resumed my seat mechanically, musing on what she said, and recollecting also, what had escaped me in my first glow of resentment, that I had no title whatever to constitute myself Miss Vernon's champion. She paused to let her own emotions and mine subside, and then addressed me with more composure.

'I have already said that there is a mystery connected with Rashleigh of a dangerous and fatal nature. Villain as he is, and as he knows he stands convicted in my eyes, I cannot — dare not, openly break with or defy him. You also, Mr. Osbaldistone, must bear with him with patience, foil his artifices by opposing to them prudence, not violence; and, above all, you must avoid such scenes as that of last night, which cannot but give him perilous advantages over you. This caution I designed to give you, and it was the object with which I desired this interview; but I have extended my confidence farther than I proposed.'

I assured her it was not misplaced.

'I do not believe that it is,' she replied. 'You have that in your face and manners which authorises trust. Let us continue

to be friends. 'You need not fear,' she said, laughing, while she blushed a little, yet speaking with a free and unembarrassed voice, 'that friendship with us should prove only a specious name, as the poet says, for another feeling. I belong, in habits of thinking and acting, rather to your sex, with which I have always been brought up, than to my own. Besides, the fatal veil was wrapt round me in my cradle; for you may easily believe I have never thought of the detestable condition under which I may remove it. The time,' she added, 'for expressing my final determination is not arrived, and I would fain have the freedom of wild heath and open air, with the other commoners of nature, as long as I can be permitted to enjoy them. And now that the passage in Dante is made so clear, pray go and see what is become of the badger-baiters. My head aches so much that I cannot join the party.'

I left the library, but not to join the hunters. I felt that a solitary walk was necessary to compose my spirits before I again trusted myself in Rashleigh's company, whose depth of calculating villainy had been so strikingly exposed to me. In Dubourg's family (as he was of the Reformed persuasion) I had heard many a tale of Romish priests who gratified at the expense of friendship, hospitality, and the most sacred ties of social life, those passions the blameless indulgence of which is denied by the rules of their order. But the deliberate system of undertaking the education of a deserted orphan of noble birth, and so intimately allied to his own family, with the perfidious purpose of ultimately seducing her, detailed as it was by the intended victim with all the glow of virtuous resentment, seemed more atrocious to me than the worst of the tales I had heard at Bourdeaux, and I felt it would be extremely difficult for me to meet Rashleigh and yet to suppress the abhorrence with which he impressed me. Yet this was absolutely necessary, not only on account of the mysterious charge which Diana had given me, but because I had in reality no ostensible ground for quarrelling with him.

I therefore resolved, as far as possible, to meet Rashleigh's dissimulation with equal caution on my part during our residence in the same family; and when he should depart for London, I resolved to give Owen at least such a hint of his character as might keep him on his guard over my father's interests. Avarice or ambition, I thought, might have as great, or greater, charms for a mind constituted like Rashleigh's, than unlawful pleasure; the energy of his character, and his power of assuming

all seeming good qualities, were likely to procure him a high degree of confidence, and it was not to be hoped that either good faith or gratitude would prevent him from abusing it. The task was somewhat difficult, especially in my circumstances, since the caution which I threw out might be imputed to jealousy of my rival, or rather my successor, in my father's favour. Yet I thought it absolutely necessary to frame such a letter, leaving it to Owen, who, in his own line, was wary, prudent, and circumspect, to make the necessary use of his knowledge of Rashleigh's true character. Such a letter, therefore, I indited and despatched to the post-house by the first opportunity.

At my meeting with Rashleigh he, as well as I, appeared to have taken up distant ground, and to be disposed to avoid all pretext for collision. He was probably conscious that Miss Vernon's communications had been unfavourable to him, though he could not know that they extended to discovering his meditated villainy towards her. Our intercourse, therefore, was reserved on both sides, and turned on subjects of little interest. Indeed, his stay at Osbaldistone Hall did not exceed a few days after this period, during which I only remarked two circumstances respecting him. The first was, the rapid and almost intuitive manner in which his powerful and active mind seized upon and arranged the elementary principles necessary in his new profession, which he now studied hard, and occasionally made parade of his progress, as if to show me how light it was for him to lift the burden which I had flung down from very weariness and inability to carry it. The other remarkable circumstance was that, notwithstanding the injuries with which Miss Vernon charged Rashleigh, they had several private interviews together of considerable length, although their bearing towards each other in public did not seem more cordial than usual.

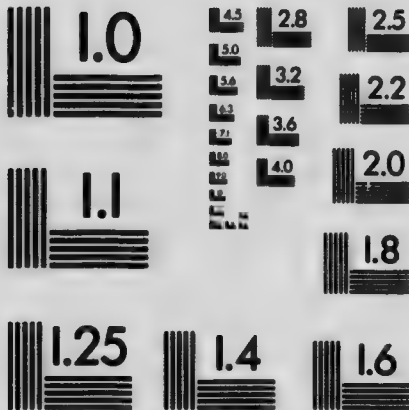
When the day of Rashleigh's departure arrived, his father bade him farewell with indifference; his brothers, with the ill-concealed glee of school-boys, who see their taskmaster depart for a season, and feel a joy which they dare not express; and I myself with cold politeness. When he approached Miss Vernon, and would have saluted her, she drew back with a look of haughty disdain; but said, as she extended her hand to him, 'Farewell, Rashleigh. God reward you for the good you have done, and forgive you for the evil you have meditated.'

'Amen, my fair cousin,' he replied, with an air of sanctity, which belonged, I thought, to the seminary of Saint Omer's;



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'happy is he whose good intentions have borne fruit in deeds, and whose evil thoughts have perished in the blossom.'

These were his parting words. 'Accomplished hypocrite!' said Miss Vernon to me, as the door closed behind him. 'How nearly can what we most despise and hate approach in outward manner to that which we most venerate!'

I had written to my father by Rashleigh, and also a few lines to Owen, besides the confidential letter which I have already mentioned, and which I thought it more proper and prudent to despatch by another conveyance. In these epistles it would have been natural for me to have pointed out to my father and my friend that I was at present in a situation where I could improve myself in no respect, unless in the mysteries of hunting and hawking; and where I was not unlikely to forget, in the company of rude grooms and horse-boys, any useful knowledge or elegant accomplishments which I had hitherto acquired. It would also have been natural that I should have expressed the disgust and tedium which I was likely to feel among beings whose whole souls were centred in field-sports or more degrading pastimes; that I should have complained of the habitual intemperance of the family in which I was a guest, and the difficulty and almost resentment with which my uncle, Sir Hildebrand, received any apology for deserting the bottle. This last, indeed, was a topic on which my father, himself a man of severe temperance, was likely to be easily alarmed, and to have touched upon this spring would to a certainty have opened the doors of my prison-house, and would either have been the means of abridging my exile, or at least would have procured me a change of residence during my rustication.

I say, my dear Tresham, that, considering how very unpleasant a prolonged residence at Osbaldistone Hall must have been to a young man of my age, and with my habits, it might have seemed very natural that I should have pointed out all these disadvantages to my father, in order to obtain his consent for leaving my uncle's mansion. Nothing, however, is more certain than that I did not say a single word to this purpose in my letters to my father and Owen. If Osbaldistone Hall had been Athens in all its pristine glory of learning, and inhabited by sages, heroes, and poets, I could not have expressed less inclination to leave it.

If thou hast any of the salt of youth left in thee, Tresham, thou wilt be at no loss to account for my silence on a topic

seemingly so obvious. Miss Vernon's extreme beauty, of which she herself seemed so little conscious, her romantic and mysterious situation, the evils to which she was exposed, the courage with which she seemed to face them, her manners, more frank than belonged to her sex, yet, as it seemed to me, exceeding in frankness only from the dauntless consciousness of her innocence — above all, the obvious and flattering distinction which she made in my favour over all other persons, were at once calculated to interest my best feelings, to excite my curiosity, awaken my imagination, and gratify my vanity. I dared not, indeed, confess to myself the depth of the interest with which Miss Vernon inspired me, or the large share which she occupied in my thoughts. We read together, walked together, rode together, and sate together. The studies which she had broken off upon her quarrel with Rashleigh, she now resumed under the auspices of a tutor whose views were more sincere, though his capacity was far more limited.

In truth, I was by no means qualified to assist her in the prosecution of several profound studies which she had commenced with Rashleigh, and which appeared to me more fitted for a churchman than for a beautiful female. Neither can I conceive with what view he should have engaged Diana in the gloomy maze of casuistry which schoolmen called philosophy, or in the equally abstruse, though more certain, sciences of mathematics and astronomy ; unless it were to break down and confound in her mind the difference and distinction between the sexes, and to habituate her to trains of subtile reasoning, by which he might at his own time invest that which is wrong with the colour of that which is right. It was in the same spirit, though in the latter case the evil purpose was more obvious, that the lessons of Rashleigh had encouraged Miss Vernon in setting at nought and despising the forms and ceremonial limits which are drawn round females in modern society. It is true, she was sequestered from all female company, and could not learn the usual rules of decorum, either from example or precept ; yet such was her innate modesty, and accurate sense of what was right and wrong, that she would not of herself have adopted the bold uncompromising manner which struck me with so much surprise on our first acquaintance, had she not been led to conceive that a contempt of ceremony indicated at once superiority of understanding and the confidence of conscious innocence. Her wily instructor had no doubt his own

views in levelling those outworks which reserve and caution erect around virtue. But for these and for his other crimes he has long since answered at a higher tribunal.

Besides the progress which Miss Vernon, whose powerful mind readily adopted every means of information offered to it, had made in more abstract science, I found her no contemptible linguist, and well acquainted both with ancient and modern literature. Were it not that strong talents will often go farthest when they seem to have least assistance, it would be almost incredible to tell the rapidity of Miss Vernon's progress in knowledge; and it was still more extraordinary when her stock of mental acquisitions from books was compared with her total ignorance of actual life. It seemed as if she saw and knew everything except what passed in the world around her; and I believe it was this very ignorance and simplicity of thinking upon ordinary subjects, so strikingly contrasted with her fund of general knowledge and information, which rendered her conversation so irresistibly fascinating, and riveted the attention to whatever she said or did; since it was absolutely impossible to anticipate whether her next word or action was to display the most acute perception or the most profound simplicity. The degree of danger which necessarily attended a youth of my age and keen feelings from remaining in close and constant intimacy with an object so amiable and peculiarly interesting, all who remember their own sentiments at my age may easily estimate.

CHAPTER XIV

Yon lamp its line of quivering light
Shoots from my lady's bower ;
But why should Beauty's lamp be bright
At midnight's lonely hour ?

Old Ballad.

THE mode of life at Osbaldistone Hall was too uniform to admit of description. Diana Vernon and I enjoyed much of our time in our mutual studies ; the rest of the family killed theirs in such sports and pastimes as suited the seasons, in which we also took a share. My uncle was a man of habits, and by habit became so much accustomed to my presence and mode of life that, upon the whole, he was rather fond of me than otherwise. I might probably have risen yet higher in his good graces had I employed the same arts for that purpose which were used by Rashleigh, who, availing himself of his father's disinclination to business, had gradually insinuated himself into the management of his property. But, although I readily gave my uncle the advantage of my pen and my arithmetic so often as he desired to correspond with a neighbour or settle with a tenant, and was, in so far, a more useful inmate in his family than any of his sons, yet I was not willing to oblige Sir Hildebrand by relieving him entirely from the management of his own affairs ; so that, while the good knight admitted that 'nevoy Frank was a steady, handy lad,' he seldom failed to remark in the same breath, 'that he did not think he should ha' missed Rashleigh so much as he was like to do.'

As it is particularly unpleasant to reside in a family where we are in variance with any part of it, I made some efforts to overcome the ill-will which my cousins entertained against me. I exchanged my laced hat for a jockey-cap, and made some progress in their opinion ; I broke a young colt in a manner which carried me further into their good graces. A bet or two opportunely lost to Dickon, and an extra health pledged with

Percie, placed me on an easy and familiar footing with all the young squires except Thorncliff.

I have already noticed the dislike entertained against me by this young fellow, who, as he had rather more sense, had also a much worse temper, than any of his brethren. Sullen, dogged, and quarrelsome, he regarded my residence at Osbaldistone Hall as an intrusion, and viewed with envious and jealous eyes my intimacy with Diana Vernon, whom the effect proposed to be given to a certain family compact assigned to him as an intended spouse. That he loved her could scarcely be said, at least without much misapplication of the word; but he regarded her as something appropriated to himself, and resented internally the interference which he knew not how to prevent or interrupt. I attempted a tone of conciliation towards Thorncliff on several occasions; but he rejected my advances with a manner about as gracious as that of a growling mastiff when the animal shuns and resents a stranger's attempts to caress him. I therefore abandoned him to his ill-humour, and gave myself no further trouble about the matter.

Such was the footing upon which I stood with the family at Osbaldistone Hall; but I ought to mention another of its inmates with whom I occasionally held some discourse. This was Andrew Fairservice, the gardener, who, since he had discovered that I was a Protestant, rarely suffered me to pass him without proffering his Scotch mull for a social pinch. There were several advantages attending this courtesy. In the first place, it was made at no expense, for I never took snuff; and, secondly, it afforded an excellent apology to Andrew, who was not particularly fond of hard labour, for laying aside his spade for several minutes. But, above all, these brief interviews gave Andrew an opportunity of venting the news he had collected, or the satirical remarks which his shrewd northern humour suggested.

'I am saying, sir,' he said to me one evening, with a face obviously charged with intelligence, 'I hae been down at the Trinlay Knowe.'

'Well, Andrew, and I suppose you heard some news at the ale-house?'

'Na, sir; I never gang to the yill-house — that is, unless ony neighbour was to gie me a pint, or the like o' that; but to gang there on ane's ain coat tail is a waste o' precious time and hard-won siller. But I was down at the Trinlay Knowe, as I was saying, about a wee bit business o' my ain wi' Mattie

Simpson, that wants a forpit or twa o' peers, that will never be missed in the Ha'-house; and when we were at the thrangest o' our bargain, wha suld come in but Pate Macready, the travelling merchant?'

'Pedlar, I suppose you mean?'

'E'en as your honour likes to ca' him; but it's a creditable calling and a gainfu', and has been lang in use wi' our folk. Pate's a far-awa cousin o' mine, and we were blythe to meet wi' ane anither.'

'And you went and had a jug of ale together, I suppose, Andrew? For Heaven's sake, cut short your story.'

'Bide a wee — bide a wee; you southrons are aye in sic a hurry, and this is something concerns yoursell, an ye wad tak patience to hear 't. Yill! deil a drap o' yill did Pate offer me; but Mattie gae us baith a drap skimmed milk, and ane o' her thick fit jannocks, that was as wat and raw as a divot. O, for the hinnie gridle cakes o' the North! — and sae we sat down and look out our clavers.'

'I wish you would take them out just now. Pray, tell me the news, if you have got any worth telling, for I can't stop here all night.'

'Than, if ye maun hae 't, the folk in Lunnon are a' clean wud about this bit job in the north here?'

'Clean wood! what's that?'

'Ou, just real daft, neither to haud nor to bind, a' hirdy-girdy, clean through ither, the deil's over Jock Wabster.'

'But what does all this mean? or what business have I with the devil or Jack Webster?'

'Umph!' said Andrew, looking extremely knowing, 'it's just because — just that the dirdum's a' about yon man's pokmanty.'

'Whose portmanteau? or what do you mean?'

'Ou, just the man Morris's, that he said he lost yonder; but if it's no your honour's affair, as little is it mine; and I maunna lose this gracious evening.'

And, as if suddenly seized with a violent fit of industry, Andrew began to labour most diligently.

My attention, as the crafty knave had foreseen, was now arrested, and unwilling, at the same time, to acknowledge any particular interest in that affair by asking direct questions, I stood waiting till the spirit of voluntary communication should again prompt him to resume his story. Andrew dug on manfully and spoke at intervals, but nothing to the purpose of Mr. Macready's news; and I stood and listened, cursing him in my

heart, and desirous, at the same time, to see how long his humour of contradiction would prevail over his desire of speaking upon the subject which was obviously uppermost in his mind.

'Am trenching up the sparrygrass, and am gaun to saw sum Misegun beans. They winna want them to their swine's flesh, I'se warrant; muckle gude may it do them. And siclike dung as the grieve has gien me! it should be wha's-strae, or aiten at the warst o't, and it's pease-dirt, as fizzenless as chuckie-stanes. But the huntsman guides a' as he likes about the stable-yard, and he's sold the best o' the litter, I'se warrant. But, howsoever, we maunna lose a turn o' this Saturday at e'en, for the wather's sair broken, and if there's a fair day in seven, Sunday's sure to come and lick it up. Howsomever, I'm no denying that it may settle, if it be Heaven's will, till Monday morning, and what's the use o' my breaking my back at this rate; I think I'll e'en awa' hame, for yon's the curfew, as they ca' their jowing-in bell.'

Accordingly, applying both his hands to his spade, he pitched it upright in the trench which he had been digging, and, looking at me with the air of superiority of one who knows himself possessed of important information, which he may communicate or refuse at his pleasure, pulled down the sleeves of his shirt, and walked slowly towards his coat, which lay carefully folded up upon a neighbouring garden-seat.

'I must pay the penalty of having interrupted the tiresome rascal,' thought I to myself, 'and even gratify Mr. Fairservice by taking his communication on his own terms.' Then raising my voice, I addressed him — 'And after all, Andrew, what are these London news you had from your kinsman, the travelling merchant?'

'The pedlar, your honour means?' retorted Andrew; 'but ca' him what ye wull, they're a great convenience in a countryside that's scant o' borough-towns, like this Northumberland. That's no the case, now, in Scotland. There's the kingdom o' Fife, frae Culross to the East Nuik, it's just like a great combined city. Sae mony royal boroughs yoked on end to end, like ropes of ingans, with their hie streets, and their booths, nae doubt, and their krames, and houses of stane and lime and forestairs. Kirkcaldy, the sell o't, is langer than ony town in England.'

'I daresay it is all very splendid and very fine; but you were talking of the London news a little while ago, Andrew.'

'Ay,' replied Andrew, 'but I dinna think your honour cared

to hear about them. Howsoever,' he continued, grinning a ghastly smile, 'Pate Macready does say that they are sair mistrusted yonder in their Parliament House about this rubbery o' Mr. Morris, or whatever they ca' the chiel.'

'In the House of Parliament, Andrew! How came they to mention it there?'

'Ou, that's just what I said to Pate; if it like your honour, I'll tell you the very words; it's no worth making a lie for the matter — "Pate," said I, "what ado had the lords and lairds and gentles at Lunnon wi' the carle and his walisie? When we had a Scotch Parliament, Pate," says I — and deil rax their thrapples that reft us o't! — "they sate dousely down and made laws for a haill country and kinrick, and never fashed their beards about things that were competent to the judge ordinar o' the bounds; but I think," said I, "that if ae kail-wife pou'd aff her neighbour's mutch they wad hae the twasome o' them into the Parliament House o' Lunnon. It's just," said I, "amaist as silly as our auld daft laird here and his gomerils o' sons, wi' his huntsmen and his hounds, and his hunting cattle and horns, riding haill days after a bit beast that winna weigh sax punds when they hae catched it.'"

'You argued most admirably, Andrew,' said I, willing to encourage him to get into the marrow of his intelligence; 'and what said Pate?'

'Ou,' he said, 'what better cou'd be expected of a wheen poek-pudding English folk? But as to the robbery, it's like that when they're a' at the thrang o' their Whig and Tory wark, and ca'ing ane anither, like unhang'd blackguards, up gets ae lang-tony auld, and he says that a' the north of England were ran — and, quietly, he wasna far wrang maybe — and that he had levied amaist open war, and a king's messenger had stoppit and rubbit on the highway, and that the best young o' Northumberland had been at the doing o't; and mickle gowd ta'en aff him, and mony valuable papers; and that there was nae redress to be gotten by remeed of law, for the first justice o' the peace that the rubbit man gaed to, he had fund the twa loons that did the deed birling and drinking wi' him, wha but they? and the justice took the word o' the tane for the compearance o' the tither; and that they e'en gae him leg-bail, and the honest man that had lost his siller was fain to leave the country for fear that waur had come of it.'

'Can this be really true?' said I.

'Pate swears it's as true as that his ell-wand is a yard lang —

and so it is, just bating an inch, that it may meet the English measure. And when the chield had said his warst, there was a terrible cry for names, and out comes he wi' this man Morris's name, and your uncle's, and Squire Inglewood's, and other folks' beside (looking sly at me). And then another dragon o' a chield got up on the other side and said, wad they accuse the best gentlemen in the land on the out: of a broken coward? for it's like that Morris had been drummed out o' the army for rinnin' awa in Flanders; and he said, it was like the story had been made up between the minister and him or ever he had left Lunnon; and that, if there was to be a search-warrant granted, he thought the siller wad be fund some gate near to St. James's Palace. Aweel, they trailed up Morris to their bar, as they ca't, to see what he could say to the job; but the folk that were again him gae him sic an awfu' throughgaun about his rinnin' awa, and about a' the ill he had ever dune or said for a' the forepart o' his life, that Patie says he looked mair like ane dead than living; and they cou'dna get a word o' sense out o' him, for downricht fright at their gowling and routing. He maun be a saft sap, wi' a head nae better than a fozy frosted turnip: it wad hae ta'en a hantle o' them to scaur Andrew Fairservice out o' his tale.'

'And how did it all end, Andrew? did your friend happen to learn?'

'Ou, ay; for as his walk's in this country, Pate put aff his journey for the space of a week or thereby, because it wad be acceptable to his customers to bring down the news. It just a' gaed aff like moonshine in water. The fallow that began it drew in his horns and said that, though he believed the man had been rubbit, yet he acknowledged he might hae been mista'en about the particulars. And then the other chield got up and said he cared na whether Morris was rubbit or no, provided it wasna to become a stain on ony gentleman's honour and reputation, especially in the north of England; "for," said he before them, "I come frae the north mysell, and I carena a boddle wha kens it." And this is what they ca' explaining — the tane gies up a bit, and the tither gies up a bit, and a' friends again. Aweel, after the Commons' Parliament had tuggit and rived and ruggit at Morris and his rubbery till they were tired o't, the Lords' Parliament they behoved to hae their spell o't. In puir auld Scotland's Parliament they a' sate thegither, cheek by choul, and than they didna need to hae the same blethers twice ower again. But till't their lordships

went wi' as muckle teeth and gude-will as if the matter had been a' speck and span new. Forbye, there was something said about ane Campbell, that suld hae been concerned in the robbery, mair or less, and that he suld hae had a warrant frae the Duke of Argyle, as a testimonial o' his character. And this put MacCallum More's beard in a bleize, as gude reason there was; and he gat up wi' an unco bang, and garr'd them a' look about them, and wad run it ev a' down their throats there was never ane o' the Campbells but was as wight, wise, warlike, and worthy trust as auld Sir John the Greime. Now, if your honour's sure ye arena a drap's bluid akin to a Campbell, as I am nane mysell, sae far as I can count my kin or hae had it counted to me, I'll gie ye my mind on that matter.'

'You may be assured I have no connexion whatever with any gentleman of the name.'

'Ou, than we may speak it quietly amang oursell. There's baith gude and bad o' the Campbells, like other names. But this MacCallum More has an unco sway and say baith amang the grit folk at Lunnon even now; for he canna preecesely be said to belang to ony o' the twa sides o' them, sae deil ane o' them likes to quarrel wi' him; sae they e'en voted Morris's tale a fause calumnious libel, as they ca't, and if he hadna gien them leg-bail, he was likely to hae ta'en the air on the pillory for leasing-making.'

So speaking, honest Andrew collected his dibbles, spades, and hoes, and threw them into a wheel-barrow -- leisurely, however, and allowing me full time to put any farther questions which might occur to me before he trundled them off to the tool-house, there to repose during the ensuing day. I thought it best to speak out -- ice, lest this meddling fellow should suppose there were more weighty reasons for my silence than actually existed.

'I should like to see this countryman of yours, Andrew, and to hear his news from himself directly. You have probably heard that I had some trouble from the impertinent folly of this man, Morris (Andrew grinned a most significant grin), and I should wish to see your cousin, the merchant, to ask him the particulars of what he heard in London, if it could be done without much trouble.'

'Naething mair easy,' Andrew observed; 'he had but to hint to his cousin that I wanted a pair or twa o' hose, and he wad be wi' me as fast as he could lay leg to the ground.'

'O yes, assure him I shall be a customer; and as the night is,

as you say, settled and fair, I shall walk in the garden until he comes; the moon will soon rise over the fells. You may bring him to the little back-gate; and I shall have pleasure, in the meanwhile, in looking on the bushes and evergreens by the bright frosty moonlight.'

'Vara right — vara right; that's what I hae aften said — a kail-blaid or a colliflour glances sae gleg'y by moonlight, it's like a leddy in her diamonds.'

So saying, off went Andrew Fairservice with great glee. He had to walk about two miles, a labour he undertook with the greatest pleasure, in order to secure to his kinsman the sale of some articles of his trade, though it is probable he would not have given him sixpence to treat him to a quart of ale. 'The good-will of an Englishman would have displayed itself in a manner exactly the reverse of Andrew's,' thought I, as I paced along the smooth-cut velvet walks, which, embowered with high hedges of yew and of holly, intersected the ancient garden of Osbaldistone Hall.

As I turned to retrace my steps, it was natural that I should lift up my eyes to the windows of the old library, which, small in size but several in number, stretched along the second story of that side of the house which now faced me. Light glanced from their casements. I was not surprised at this, for I knew Miss Vernon often sate there of an evening, though from motives of delicacy I put a strong restraint upon myself, and never sought to join her at a time when I knew, all the rest of the family being engaged for the evening, our interviews must necessarily have been strictly *tête-à-tête*. In the mornings we usually read together in the same room; but then it often happened that one or other of our cousins entered to seek some parchment duodecimo that could be converted into a fishing-book, despite its gildings and illumination, or to tell us of some 'sport toward,' or from mere want of knowing where else to dispose of themselves. In short, in the mornings the library was a sort of public room, where man and woman might meet as on neutral ground. In the evening it was very different; and, bred in a country where much attention is paid, or was at least then paid, to *bienséance*, I was desirous to think for Miss Vernon concerning those points of propriety where her experience did not afford her the means of thinking for herself. I made her therefore comprehend, as delicately as I could, that when we had evening lessons the presence of a third party was proper.

Miss Vernon first laughed, then blushed, and was disposed to be displeased; and then, suddenly checking herself, said, 'I believe you are very right; and when I feel inclined to be a very busy scholar I will bribe old Martha with a cup of tea to sit by me and be my screen.'

Martha, the old housekeeper, partook of the taste of the family at the Hall. A toast and tankard would have pleased her better than all the tea in China. However, as the use of this beverage was then confined to the higher ranks, Martha felt some vanity in being asked to partake of it; and by dint of a great deal of sugar, many words scarce less sweet, and abundance of toast and butter, she was sometimes prevailed upon to give us her countenance. On other occasions the servants almost unanimously shunned the library after nightfall, because it was their foolish pleasure to believe that it lay on the haunted side of the house. The more timid ones had seen sights and heard sounds there when all the rest of the house was quiet; and even the young squires were far from having any wish to enter these formidable precincts after nightfall without necessity.

That the library had at one time been a favourite resource of Rashleigh, that a private door out of one side of it communicated with the sequestered and remote apartment which he chose for himself, rather increased than diminished the terrors which the household had for the dreaded library of Osbaldistone Hall. His extensive information as to what passed in the world, his profound knowledge of science of every kind, a few physical experiments which he occasionally showed off, were, in a house of so much ignorance and bigotry, esteemed good reasons for supposing him endowed with powers over the spiritual world. He understood Greek, Latin, and Hebrew; and therefore, according to the apprehension, and in the phrase, of his brother Wilfred, needed not to care 'for ghaist or bargaist, devil or dobbie.' Yea, the servants persisted that they had heard him hold conversations in the library when every vassal soul in the family were gone to bed; and that he spent the night in watching for bogles, and the morning in sleeping in his bed, when he should have been heading the hounds like a true Osbaldistone.

All these absurd rumours I had heard in broken hints and imperfect sentences, from which I was left to draw the inference; and, as easily may be supposed, I laughed them to scorn. But the extreme solitude to which this chamber of evil fame was committed every night after curfew time was an additional

reason why I should not intrude on Miss Vernon when she chose to sit there in the evening.

To resume what I was saying, I was not surprised to see a glimmering of light from the library windows; but I was a little struck when I distinctly perceived the shadows of two persons pass along and intercept the light from the first of the windows, throwing the casement for a moment into shade. 'It must be old Martha,' thought I, 'whom Diana has engaged to be her companion for the evening, or I must have been mistaken, and taken Diana's shadow for a second person. No, by Heaven! it appears on the second window — two figures distinctly traced; and now it is lost again; it is seen on the third, on the fourth, the darkened forms of two persons distinctly seen in each window as they pass along the room betwixt the windows and the lights. Whom can Diana have got for a companion?' The passage of the shadows between the lights and the casements was twice repeated, as if to satisfy me that my observation served me truly; after which the lights were extinguished, and the shades, of course, were seen no more.

Trifling as this circumstance was, it occupied my mind for a considerable time. I did not allow myself to suppose that my friendship for Miss Vernon had any directly selfish view; yet it is incredible the displeasure I felt at the idea of her admitting any one to private interviews at a time and in a place where, for her own sake, I had been at some trouble to show her that it was improper for me to meet with her.

'Silly, romping, incorrigible girl!' said I to myself, 'on whom all good advice and delicacy are thrown away! I have been cheated by the simplicity of her manner, which I suppose she can assume just as she could a straw bonnet, were it the fashion, for the mere sake of celebrity. I suppose, notwithstanding the excellence of her understanding, the society of half a dozen of clowns to play at whisk and swabbers would give her more pleasure than if Ariosto himself were to awake from the dead.'

This reflection came the more powerfully across my mind because, having mustered up courage to show to Diana my version of the first books of Ariosto, I had requested her to invite Martha to a tea-party in the library that evening, to which arrangement Miss Vernon had refused her consent, alleging some apology which I thought frivolous at the time. I had not long speculated on this disagreeable subject when the back garden-door opened and the figures of Andrew and his

countryman, bending under his pack, crossed the moonlight alley, and called my attention elsewhere.

I found Mr. Macready, as I expected, a tough, sagacious, long-headed Scotchman, and a collector of news both from choice and profession. He was able to give me a distinct account of what had passed in the House of Commons and House of Lords on the affair of Morris, which, it appears, had been made by both parties a touchstone to ascertain the temper of the Parliament. It appeared also that, as I had learned from Andrew by second hand, the ministry had proved too weak to support a story involving the character of men of rank and importance, and resting upon the credit of a person of such indifferent fame as Morris, who was, moreover, confused and contradictory in his mode of telling the story. Macready was even able to supply me with a copy of a printed journal, or news-letter, seldom extending beyond the capital, in which the substance of the debate was mentioned; and with a copy of the Duke of Argyle's speech, printed upon a broadside, of which he had purchased several from the hawkers, because, he said, it would be a saleable article on the north of the Tweed. The first was a meagre statement, full of blanks and asterisks, and which added little or nothing to the information I had from the Scotchman; and the Duke's speech, though spirited and eloquent, contained chiefly a panegyric on his country, his family, and his clan, with a few compliments, equally sincere, perhaps, though less glowing, which he took so favourable an opportunity of paying to himself. I could not learn whether my own reputation had been directly implicated, although I perceived that the honour of my uncle's family had been impeached, and that this person Campbell, stated by Morris to have been the most active robber of the two by whom he was assailed, was said by him to have appeared in the behalf of a Mr. Osbaldistone, and by the connivance of the Justice procured his liberation. In this particular Morris's story jumped with my own suspicions, which had attached to Campbell from the moment I saw him appear at Justice Inglewood's. Vexed upon the whole, as well as perplexed with this extraordinary story, I dismissed the two Scotchmen, after making some purchases from Macready, and a small compliment to Fairservice, and retired to my own apartment to consider what I ought to do in defence of my character thus publicly attacked.

CHAPTER XV

Whence, and what art thou ?

MILTON.

AFTER exhausting a sleepless night in meditating on the intelligence I had received, I was at first inclined to think that I ought as speedily as possible to return to London, and by my open appearance repel the calumny which had been spread against me. But I hesitated to take this course on recollection of my father's disposition, singularly absolute in his decisions as to all that concerned his family. He was most able, certainly, from experience, to direct what I ought to do, and, from his acquaintance with the most distinguished Whigs then in power, had influence enough to obtain a hearing for my cause. So upon the whole I judged it most safe to state my whole story in the shape of a narrative addressed to my father ; and as the ordinary opportunities of intercourse between the Hall and the post-town recurred rarely, I determined to ride to the town, which was about ten miles' distance, and deposit my letter in the post-office with my own hands.

Indeed I began to think it strange that, though several weeks had elapsed since my departure from home, I had received no letter either from my father or Owen, although Rashleigh had written to Sir Hildebrand of his safe arrival in London, and of the kind reception he had met with from his uncle. Admitting that I might have been to blame, I did not deserve, in my own opinion at least, to be so totally forgotten by my father ; and I thought my present excursion might have the effect of bringing a letter from him to hand more early than it would otherwise have reached me. But, before concluding my letter concerning the affair of Morris, I failed not to express my earnest hope and wish that my father would honour me with a few lines ; were it but to express his advice and commands in an affair of some difficulty, and where my

knowledge of life could not be supposed adequate to my own guidance. I found it impossible to prevail on myself to urge my actual return to London as a place of residence, and I disguised my unwillingness to do so under apparent submission to my father's will, which, as I imposed it on myself as a sufficient reason for not urging my final departure from Osbaldistone Hall, would, I doubted not, be received as such by my parent. But I begged permission to come to London, for a short time at least, to meet and refute the infamous calumnies which had been circulated concerning me in so public a manner. Having made up my packet, in which my earnest desire to vindicate my character was strangely blended with reluctance to quit my present place of residence, I rode over to the post-town and deposited my letter in the office. By doing so, I obtained possession, somewhat earlier than I should otherwise have done, of the following letter from my friend Mr. Owen : —

‘DEAR MR. FRANCIS,

‘Yours received per favour of Mr. R. Osbaldistone, and note the contents. Shall do Mr. R. O. such civilities as are in my power, and have taken him to see the Bank and custom-house. He seems a sober, steady young gentleman, and takes to business; so will be of service to the firm. Could have wished another person had turned his mind that way; but God's will be done. As cash may be scarce in those parts, have to trust you will excuse my inclosing a goldsmith's bill at six days' sight, on Messrs. Hooper and Girder of Newcastle, for £100, which I doubt not will be duly honoured. — I remain, as in duty bound, dear Mr. Frank, your very respectful and obedient servant,

JOSEPH OWEN.

‘*Postscriptum.* — Hope you will advise the above coming safe to hand. Am sorry we have so few of yours. Your father says he is as usual, but looks poorly.’

From this epistle, written in old Owen's formal style, I was rather surprised to observe that he made no acknowledgment of that private letter which I had written to him, with a view to possess him of Rashleigh's real character, although, from the course of post, it seemed certain that he ought to have received it. Yet I had sent it by the usual conveyance from the Hall, and had no reason to suspect that it could miscarry upon the road. As it comprised matters of great importance,

both to my father and to myself, I sat down in the post-office and again wrote to Owen, recapitulating the heads of my former letter, and requesting to know in course of post if it had reached him in safety. I also acknowledged the receipt of the bill, and promised to make use of the contents if I should have any occasion for money. I thought, indeed, it was odd that my father should leave the care of supplying my necessities to his clerk; but I concluded it was a matter arranged between them. At any rate Owen was a bachelor, rich in his way, and passionately attached to me, so that I had no hesitation in being obliged to him for a small sum, which I resolved to consider as a loan, to be returned with my earliest ability, in case it was not previously repaid by my father; and I expressed myself to this purpose to Mr. Owen. A shopkeeper in a little town, to whom the postmaster directed me, readily gave me in gold the amount of my bill on Messrs. Hooper and Girder, so that I returned to Osbaldistone Hall a good deal richer than I had set forth. This recruit to my finances was not a matter of indifference to me, as I was necessarily involved in some expenses at Osbaldistone Hall; and I had seen, with some uneasy impatience, that the sum which my travelling expenses had left unexhausted at my arrival there was imperceptibly diminishing. This source of anxiety was for the present removed. On my arrival at the Hall I found that Sir Hildebrand and all his offspring had gone down to the little hamlet, called Trinlay Knowe, 'to see,' as Andrew Fairservice expressed it, 'a wheen midden-cocks pike ilk ither's harns out.'

'It is indeed a brutal amusement, Andrew; I suppose you have none such in Scotland?'

'Na, na,' answered Andrew, boldly; then shaded away his negative with, 'unless it be on Fastern's E'en, or the like o' that. But, indeed, it's no muckle matter what the folk do to the midden pootry, for they haud siccan a skarting and scraping in the yard that there's nae getting a bean or pea keepit for them. But I am wondering what it is that leaves that turret-door open; now that Mr. Rashleigh's away it canna be him, I trow.'

The turret-door to which he alluded opened to the garden at the bottom of a winding-siair, leading down from Mr. Rashleigh's apartments. This, as I have already mentioned, was situated in a sequestered part of the house, communicating with the library by a private entrance, and by another intricate and dark vaulted passage with the rest of the house. A

long narrow turf-walk led, between two high holly hedges, from the turret-door to a little postern in the wall of the garden. By means of these communications Rashleigh, whose movements were very independent of those of the rest of his family, could leave the Hall or return to it at pleasure, without his absence or presence attracting any observation. But during his absence the stair and the turret-door were entirely disused, and this made Andrew's observation somewhat remarkable.

'Have you often observed that door open?' was my question. 'No just that often neither; but I hae noticed it ance or twice. I'm thinking it maun hae been the priest, Father Vaughan, as they ca' him. Ye'll no catch ane o' the servants ganging up that stair, puir frightened heathens that they are, for fear of bogles and brownies, and lang-nebbit things frae the neist world. But Father Vaughan thinks himsell a privileged person — set him up and lay him down! I'se be caution the warst stibbler that ever stickit a sermon out ower the Tweed yonder wad lay a ghaist twice as fast as him, wi' his holy water and his idolatrous trinkets. I dinna believe he speaks gude Latin neither; at least he disna take me up when I tell him the learned names o' the plants.'

Of Father Vaughan, who divided his time and his ghostly care between Osbaldistone Hall and about half a dozen mansions of Catholic gentlemen in the neighbourhood, I have as yet said nothing, for I had seen but little. He was aged about sixty, of a good family, as I was given to understand, in the north; of a striking and imposing presence, grave in his exterior, and much respected among the Catholics of Northumberland as a worthy and upright man. Yet Father Vaughan did not altogether lack those peculiarities which distinguish his order. There hung about him an air of mystery, which in Protestant eyes savoured of priestcraft. The natives — such they might be well termed — of Osbaldistone Hall looked up to him with much more fear, or at least more awe, than affection. His condemnation of their revels was evident from their being discontinued in some measure when the priest was a resident at the Hall. Even Sir Hildebrand himself put some restraint upon his conduct at such times, which perhaps rendered Father Vaughan's presence rather irksome than otherwise. He had the well-bred, insinuating, and almost flattering address peculiar to the clergy of his persuasion, especially in England, where the lay Catholic, hemmed in by penal laws, and by the restrictions of his sect and recommenda-

tion of his pastor, often exhibits a reserved, and almost a timid, manner in the society of Protestants ; while the priest, privileged by his order to mingle with persons of all creeds, is open, alert, and liberal in his intercourse with them, desirous of popularity, and usually skilful in the mode of obtaining it.

Father Vaughan was a particular acquaintance of Rashleigh's, otherwise in all probability he would scarce have been able to maintain his footing at Osbaldistone Hall. This gave me no desire to cultivate his intimacy, nor did he seem to make any advances towards mine ; so our occasional intercourse was confined to the exchange of mere civility. I considered it as extremely probable that Mr. Vaughan might occupy Rashleigh's apartment during his occasional residence at the Hall ; and his profession rendered it likely that he should occasionally be a tenant of the library. Nothing was more probable than that it might have been his candle which had excited my attention on a preceding evening. This led me involuntarily to recollect that the intercourse between Miss Vernon and the priest was marked with something like the same mystery which characterised her communications with Rashleigh. I had never heard her mention Vaughan's name, or even allude to him, excepting on the occasion of our first meeting, when she mentioned the old priest and Rashleigh as the only conversible beings besides herself in Osbaldistone Hall. Yet although silent with respect to Father Vaughan, his arrival at the Hall never failed to impress Miss Vernon with an anxious and fluttering tremor, which lasted until they had exchanged one or two significant glances.

Whatever the mystery might be which overclouded the destinies of this beautiful and interesting female, it was clear that Father Vaughan was implicated in it ; unless, indeed, I could suppose that he was the agent employed to procure her settlement in the cloister, in the event of her rejecting a union with either of my cousins — an office which would sufficiently account for her obvious emotion at his appearance. As to the rest, they did not seem to converse much together, or even to seek each other's society. Their league, if any subsisted between them, was of a tacit and understood nature, operating on their actions without any necessity of speech. I recollected, however, on reflection, that I had once or twice discovered signs pass betwixt them, which I had at the time supposed to bear reference to some hint concerning Miss Vernon's religious observances, knowing how artfully the Catholic clergy main-

tain, at all times and seasons, their influence over the minds of their followers. But now I was disposed to assign to these communications a deeper and more mysterious import. Did he hold private meetings with Miss Vernon in the library? was a question which occupied my thoughts; and if so, for what purpose? And why should she have admitted an intimate of the deceitful Rashleigh to such close confidence?

These questions and difficulties pressed on my mind with an interest which was greatly increased by the impossibility of resolving them. I had already begun to suspect that my friendship for Diana Vernon was not altogether so disinterested as in wisdom it ought to have been. I had already felt myself becoming jealous of the contemptible lout Thorncliff, and taking more notice than in prudence or dignity of feeling I ought to have done of his silly attempts to provoke me. And now I was scrutinising the conduct of Miss Vernon with the most close and eager observation, which I in vain endeavoured to palm on myself as the offspring of idle curiosity. All these, like Benedick's brushing his hat of a morning, were signs that the sweet youth was in love; and while my judgment still denied that I had been guilty of forming an attachment so imprudent, she resembled those ignorant guides who, when they have led the traveller and themselves into irretrievable error, persist in obstinately affirming it to be impossible that they can have missed the way.

CHAPTER XVI

'It happened one day about noon, going to my boat, I was exceedingly surprised with the print of a man's naked foot on the shore, which was very plain to be seen on the sand.'

Robinson Crusoe.

WITH the blended feelings of interest and jealousy which were engendered by Miss Vernon's singular situation, my observations of her looks and actions became acutely sharpened, and that to a degree which, notwithstanding my efforts to conceal it, could not escape her penetration. The sense that she was observed, or, more properly speaking, that she was watched by my looks, seemed to give Diana a mixture of embarrassment, pain, and pettishness. At times it seemed that she sought an opportunity of resenting a conduct which she could not but feel as offensive, considering the frankness with which she had mentioned the difficulties that surrounded her. At other times she seemed prepared to expostulate upon the subject. But either her courage failed or some other sentiment impeded her seeking an *éclaircissement*. Her displeasure evaporated in repartee, and her expostulations died on her lips. We stood in a singular relation to each other, spending, and by mutual choice, much of our time in close society with each other, yet disguising our mutual sentiments, and jealous of, or offended by, each other's actions. There was betwixt us intimacy without confidence; on one side love without hope or purpose, and curiosity without any rational or justifiable motive; and on the other embarrassment and doubt, occasionally mingled with displeasure. Yet I believe that this agitation of the passions, such is the nature of the human bosom, as it continued by a thousand irritating and interesting, though petty circumstances, to render Miss Vernon and me the constant objects of each other's thoughts, tended upon the whole to increase the attachment with which we were naturally disposed to regard each other. But although my vanity early discovered that my presence at Osbaldistone Hall had given Diana some

additional reason for disliking the cloister, I could by no means confide in an affection which seemed completely subordinate to the mysteries of her singular situation. Miss Vernon was of a character far too formed and determined to permit her love for me to overpower either her sense of duty or of prudence, and she gave me a proof of this in a conversation which we had together about this period.

We were sitting together in the library. Miss Vernon, in turning over a copy of the *Orlando Furioso* which belonged to me, shook a piece of written paper from between the leaves. I hastened to lift it, but she prevented me.

'It is verse,' she said, on glancing at the paper; and then unfolding it, but as it to wait my answer before proceeding — 'May I take the liberty? nay, nay, if you blush and stammer I must do violence to your modesty and suppose that permission is granted.'

'It is not worthy your perusal — a scrap of a translation. My dear Miss Vernon, it would be too severe a trial that you, who understand the original so well, should sit in judgment.'

'Mine honest friend,' replied Diana, 'do not, if you will be guided by my advice, bait your hook with too much humility; for, ten to one, it will not catch a single compliment. You know I belong to the unpopular family of Tell-truths, and would not flatter Apollo for his lyre.'

She proceeded to read the first stanza, which was nearly to the following purpose: —

Ladies, and knights, and arms, and love's fair flame,
Deeds of emprise and courtesy, I sing;
What time the Moors from sultry Africk came,
Led on by Agramant, their youthful king —
He whom revenge and hasty ire did bring
O'er the broad wave, in France to waste and war.
Such ills from old Trojano's death did spring,
Which to avenge he came from realms afar,
And menaced Christian Charles, the Roman Emperor.

Of dauntless Roland, too, my strain shall sound,
In import never known in prose or rhyme,
How he, the chief, of judgment deem'd profound,
For luckless love was crazed upon a time —

'There is a great deal of it,' said she, glancing along the paper, and interrupting the sweetest sounds which mortal ears can drink in — those of a youthful poet's verses, namely, read by the lips which are dearest to them.

'Much more than ought to engage your attention, Miss Vernon,' I replied, something mortified, and I took the verses from her unreluctant hand; 'and yet,' I continued, 'shut up as I am in this retired situation, I have felt sometimes I could not amuse myself better than by carrying on, merely for my own amusement you will of course understand, the version of this fascinating author, which I began some months since when I was on the banks of the Garonne.'

'The question would only be,' said Diana, gravely, 'whether you could not spend your time to better purpose?'

'You mean in original composition,' said I, greatly flattered; 'but, to say truth, my genius rather lies in finding words and rhymes than ideas; and therefore I am happy to use those which Ariosto has prepared to my hand. However, Miss Vernon, with the encouragement you give —'

'Pardon me, Frank, it is encouragement not of my giving but of your taking. I meant neither original composition nor translation, since I think you might employ your time to far better purpose than in either. You are mortified,' she continued, 'and I am sorry to be the cause.'

'Not mortified — certainly not mortified,' said I, with the best grace I could muster, and it was but indifferently assumed; 'I am too much obliged by the interest you take in me.'

'Nay, but,' resumed the relentless Diana, 'there is both mortification and a little grain of anger in that constrained tone of voice; do not be angry if I probe your feelings to the bottom — perhaps what I am about to say will affect them still more.'

I felt the childishness of my own conduct and the superior manliness of Miss Vernon's, and assured her that she need not fear my wincing under criticism which I knew to be kindly meant.

'That was honestly meant and said,' she replied; 'I knew full well that the fiend of poetical irritability flew away with the little preluding cough which ushered in the declaration. And now I must be serious. Have you heard from your father lately?'

'Not a word,' I replied; 'he has not honoured me with a single line during the several months of my residence here.'

'That is strange; you are a singular race, you bold Osbaldistones. Then you are not aware that he has gone to Holland to arrange some pressing affairs which required his own immediate presence?'

'I never heard a word of it until this moment.'

'And farther, it must be news to you, and I presume scarcely the most agreeable, that he has left Rashleigh in the almost uncontrolled management of his affairs until his return.'

I started, and could not suppress my surprise and apprehension.

'You have reason for alarm,' said Miss Vernon, very gravely; 'and were I you I would endeavour to meet and obviate the dangers which arise from so undesirable an arrangement.'

'And how is it possible for me to do so?'

'Everything is possible for him who possesses courage and activity,' she said, with a look resembling one of those heroines of the age of chivalry whose encouragement was wont to give champions double valour at the hour of need; 'and to the timid and hesitating everything is impossible, because it seems so.'

'And what would you advise, Miss Vernon?' I replied, wishing, yet dreading, to hear her answer.

She paused a moment, then answered firmly — 'That you instantly leave Osbaldistone Hall and return to London. You have perhaps already,' she continued, in a softer tone, 'been here too long; that fault was not yours. Every succeeding moment you waste here will be a crime. Yes, a crime; for I tell you plainly that if Rashleigh long manages your father's affairs you may consider his ruin as consummated.'

'How is this possible?'

'Ask no questions,' she said; 'but, believe me, Rashleigh's views extend far beyond the possession or increase of commercial wealth. He will only make the command of Mr. Osbaldistone's revenues and property the means of putting in motion his own ambitious and extensive schemes. While your father was in Britain this was impossible; during his absence Rashleigh will possess many opportunities, and he will not neglect to use them.'

'But how can I, in disgrace with my father and divested of all control over his affairs, prevent this danger by my mere presence in London?'

'That presence alone will do much. Your claim to interfere is a part of your birthright, and is inalienable. You will have the countenance, doubtless, of your father's head clerk and confidential friends and partners. Above all, Rashleigh's schemes are of a nature that' — she stopped abruptly, as if fearful of saying too much — 'are, in short,' she resumed, 'of

the nature of all selfish and unconscientious plans, which are speedily abandoned as soon as those who frame them perceive their arts are discovered and watched. Therefore, in the language of your favourite poet —

To horse ! to horse ! urge doubts to those that fear.

A feeling, irresistible in its impulse, induced me to reply — ‘Ah ! Diana, can *you* give me advice to leave Osbaldistone Hall ? when indeed I have already been a resident here too long !’

Miss Vernon coloured, but proceeded with great firmness : ‘indeed, I do give you this advice — not only to quit Osbaldistone Hall, but never to return to it more. You have only one friend to regret here,’ she continued, forcing a smile, ‘and she has been long accustomed to sacrifice her friendships and her comforts to the welfare of others. In the world you will meet a hundred whose friendship will be as disinterested, more useful, less encumbered by untoward circumstances, less influenced by evil tongues and evil times.’

‘Never !’ I exclaimed — ‘never ! the world can afford me nothing to repay what I must leave behind me.’ Here I took her hand and pressed it to my lips.

‘This is folly !’ she exclaimed — ‘this is madness !’ and she struggled to withdraw her hand from my grasp, but not so stubbornly as actually to succeed until I had held it for nearly a minute. ‘Hear me, sir !’ she said, ‘and curb this unmanly burst of passion. I am, by a solemn contract, the bride of Heaven, unless I could prefer being wedded to villainy in the person of Rashleigh Osbaldistone, or brutality in that of his brother. I am, therefore, the bride of Heaven, betrothed to the convent from the cradle. To me, therefore, these raptures are misapplied ; they only serve to prove a farther necessity for your departure, and that without delay.’ At these words she broke suddenly off, and said, but in a suppressed tone of voice, ‘Leave me instantly ; we will meet here again, but it must be for the last time.’

My eyes followed the direction of hers as she spoke, and I thought I saw the tapestry shake which covered the door of the secret passage from Rashleigh’s room to the library. I conceived we were observed, and turned an inquiring glance on Miss Vernon.

‘It is nothing,’ said she, faintly, “‘a rat behind the arras.”’

“‘Dead for a ducat,”’ would have been my reply had I dared to give way to the feelings which rose indignant at the idea of

being subjected to an eavesdropper on such an occasion. Prudence, and the necessity of suppressing my passion and obeying Diana's reiterated command of 'Leave me! leave me!' came in time to prevent any rash action. I left the apartment in a wild whirl and giddiness of mind, which I in vain attempted to compose when I returned to my own.

A chaos of thoughts intruded themselves on me at once, passing hastily through my brain, intercepting and overshadowing each other, and resembling those fogs which in mountainous countries are wont to descend in obscure volumes and disfigure or obliterate the usual marks by which the traveller steers his course through the wilds. The dark and undefined idea of danger arising to my father from the machinations of such a man as Rashleigh Osbaldistone; the half-declaration of love which I had offered to Miss Vernon's acceptance; the acknowledged difficulties of her situation, bound by a previous contract to sacrifice herself to a cloister or to an ill-assorted marriage—all pressed themselves at once upon my recollection, while my judgment was unable deliberately to consider any of them in their just light and bearings. But chiefly, and above all the rest, I was perplexed by the manner in which Miss Vernon had received my tender of affection, and by her manner, which, fluctuating betwixt sympathy and firmness, seemed to intimate that I possessed an interest in her bosom, but not of force sufficient to counterbalance the obstacles to her avowing a mutual affection. The glance of fear, rather than surprise, with which she had watched the motion of the tapestry over the concealed door implied an apprehension of danger which I could not but suppose well grounded; for Diana Vernon was little subject to the nervous emotions of her sex, and totally unapt to fear without actual and rational cause. Of what nature could those mysteries be with which she was surrounded as with an enchanter's spell, and which seemed continually to exert an active influence over her thoughts and actions, though their agents were never visible? On this subject of doubt my mind finally rested, as if glad to shake itself free from investigating the propriety or prudence of my own conduct, by transferring the inquiry to what concerned Miss Vernon. 'I will be resolved,' I concluded, 'ere I leave Osbaldistone Hall, concerning the light in which I must in future regard this fascinating being, over whose life frankness and mystery seem to have divided their reign, the former inspiring her words and senti-

ments, the latter spreading in misty influence over all her actions.'

Joined to the obvious interests which arose from curiosity and anxious passion, there mingled in my feelings a strong, though unavowed and undefined, infusion of jealousy. This sentiment, which springs up with love as naturally as the tares with the wheat, was excited by the degree of influence which Diana appeared to concede to those unseen beings by whom her actions were limited. The more I reflected upon her character, the more I was internally though unwillingly convinced that she was formed to set at defiance all control excepting that which arose from affection; and I felt a strong, bitter, and gnawing suspicion that such was the foundation of that influence by which she was overawed.

These tormenting doubts strengthened my desire to penetrate into the secret of Miss Vernon's conduct, and in the prosecution of this sage adventure I formed a resolution, of which, if you are not weary of these details, you will find the result in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XVII

I hear a voice you cannot hear,
Which says, I must not stay ;
I see a hand you cannot see,
Which beckons me away.

TICKELL.

I HAVE already told you, Tresham, if you deign to bear it in remembrance, that my evening visits to the library had seldom been made except by appointment, and under the sanction of old Dame Martha's presence. This, however, was entirely a tacit conventional arrangement of my own instituting. Of late, as the embarrassments of our relative situation had increased, Miss Vernon and I had never met in the evening at all. She had therefore no reason to suppose that I was likely to seek a renewal of these interviews, and especially without some previous notice or appointment betwixt us, that Martha might, as usual, be placed upon duty ; but, on the other hand, this cautionary provision was a matter of understanding, not of express enactment. The library was open to me, as to the other members of the family, at all hours of the day and night, and I could not be accused of intrusion however suddenly and unexpectedly I might make my appearance in it. My belief was strong that in this apartment Miss Vernon occasionally received Vaughan, or some other person, by whose opinion she was accustomed to regulate her conduct, and that at the times when she could do so with least chance of interruption. The lights which gleamed in the library at unusual hours, the passing shadows which I had myself remarked, the footsteps which might be traced in the morning dew from the turret-door to the postern-gate in the garden, sounds and sights which some of the servants, and Andrew Fairservice in particular, had observed and accounted for in their own way, all tended to show that the place was visited by some one different from the ordinary inmates of the Hall. Connected as

this visitant must probably be with the fates of Diana Vernon, I did not hesitate to form a plan of discovering who or what he was, how far his influence was likely to produce good or evil consequences to her on whom he acted — above all, though I endeavoured to persuade myself that this was a mere subordinate consideration, I desired to know by what means this person had acquired or maintained his influence over Diana, and whether he ruled over her by fear or by affection. The proof that this jealous curiosity was uppermost in my mind arose from my imagination always ascribing Miss Vernon's conduct to the influence of some one individual agent, although, for aught I knew about the matter, her advisers might be as numerous as legion. I remarked this over and over to myself, but I found that my mind still settled back in my original conviction that one single individual, of the masculine sex, and in all probability young and handsome, was at the bottom of Miss Vernon's conduct; and it was with a burning desire of discovering, or rather of detecting, such a rival that I stationed myself in the garden to watch the moment when the lights should appear in the library windows.

So eager, however, was my impatience that I commenced my watch for a phenomenon which could not appear until darkness a full hour before the daylight disappeared on a July evening. It was Sabbath, and all the walks were still and solitary. I walked up and down for some time, enjoying the refreshing coolness of a summer evening, and meditating on the probable consequences of my enterprise. The fresh and balmy air of the garden, impregnated with fragrance, produced its usual sedative effects on my over-heated and feverish blood; as these took place, the turmoil of my mind began proportionally to abate, and I was led to question the right I had to interfere with Miss Vernon's secrets, or with those of my uncle's family. What was it to me whom my uncle might choose to conceal in his house, where I was myself a guest only by tolerance? And what title had I to pry into the affairs of Miss Vernon, fraught, as she had avowed them to be, with mystery, into which she desired no scrutiny?

Passion and self-will were ready with their answers to these questions. In detecting this secret, I was in all probability about to do service to Sir Hildebrand, who was probably ignorant of the intrigues carried on in his family; and a still more important service to Miss Vernon, whose frank simplicity of character exposed her to so many risks in maintaining a

private correspondence, perhaps with a person of doubtful or dangerous character. If I seemed to intrude myself on her confidence, it was with the generous and disinterested — yes, I even ventured to call it the *disinterested* — intention of guiding, defending, and protecting her against craft, against malice, above all, against the secret counsellor whom she had chosen for her confidant. Such were the arguments which my will boldly preferred to my conscience as coin which ought to be current; and which conscience, like a grumbling shopkeeper, was contented to accept rather than come to an open breach with a customer, though more than doubting that the tender was spurious.

While I paced the green alleys debating these things *pro* and *con*, I suddenly lighted upon Andrew Fairservice, perched up like a statue by a range of bee-hives, in an attitude of devout contemplation; one eye, however, watching the motions of the little irritable citizens, who were settling in their straw-thatched mansion for the evening, and the other fixed on a book of devotion, which much attrition had deprived of its corners and worn into an oval shape; a circumstance which, with the close print and dingy colour of the volume in question, gave it an air of most respectable antiquity.

'I was e'en taking a spell o' worthy Mess John Quackleben's *Flower of a Sweet Savour sown on the Middenstead of this World*,' said Andrew, closing his book at my appearance, and putting his horn spectacles, by way of mark, at the place where he had been reading.

'And the bees, I observe, were dividing your attention, Andrew, with the learned author?'

'They are a contumacious generation,' replied the gardener; 'they hae sax days in the week to hive on, and yet it's a common observe that they will aye swarm on the Sabbath-day, and keep folk at hamè frae hearing the Word. But there's nae preaching at Graneagain Chapel the e'en; that's aye ae mercy.'

'You might have gone to the parish church as I did, Andrew, and heard an excellent discourse.'

'Clauts o' cauld parritch — clauts o' cauld parritch,' replied Andrew, with a most supercilious sneer; 'gude aneuch for dogs, begging your honour's pardon. Ay! I might nae doubt hae heard the curate linking awa at it in his white sark yonder, and the musicians playing on whistles, mair like a penny wedding than a sermon; and to the boot of that, I might hae gane to

even-song, and heard Daddie Docharty numbling his mass; muckle the better I wad hae been o' that!

'Docharty!' said I (this was the name of an old priest, an Irishman, I think, who sometimes officiated at Osbaldistone Hall), 'I thought Father Vaughan had been at the Hall. He was here yesterday.'

'Ay,' replied Andrew; 'but he left it yestreen, to gang to Greystock or some o' thae west-country haulds. There's an unco stir amang them a' e'enow. They are as busy as my bees are; God sain them! that I suld even the puir things to the like o' Papists. Ye see this is the second swarm, and whiles they will swarm off in the afternoon. The first swarm set off sune in the morning. But I am thinking they are settled in their skeps for the night. Sae I wuss your honour good-night, and grace, and muckle o't.'

So saying, Andrew retreated; but often cast a parting glance upon the 'skeps,' as he called the bee-hives.

I had indirectly gained from him an important piece of information — that Father Vaughan, namely, was not supposed to be at the Hall. If, therefore, there appeared light in the windows of the library this evening, it either could not be his, or he was observing a very secret and suspicious line of conduct. I waited with impatience the time of sunset and of twilight. It had hardly arrived ere a gleam from the windows of the library was seen, dimly distinguishable amidst the still enduring light of the evening. I marked its first glimpse, however, as speedily as the benighted sailor descries the first distant twinkle of the lighthouse which marks his course. The feelings of doubt and propriety which had hitherto contended with my curiosity and jealousy vanished when an opportunity of gratifying the former was presented to me. I re-entered the house, and, avoiding the more frequented apartments with the consciousness of one who wishes to keep his purpose secret, I reached the door of the library, hesitated for a moment as my hand was upon the latch, heard a suppressed step within, opened the door — and found Miss Vernon alone.

Diana appeared surprised, whether at my sudden entrance or from some other cause I could not guess; but there was in her appearance a degree of flutter which I had never before remarked, and which I knew could only be produced by unusual emotion. Yet she was calm in a moment; and such is the force of conscience, that I, who studied to surprise her, seemed myself the surprised, and was certainly the embarrassed person.

'Has anything happened?' said Miss Vernon. 'Has any one arrived at the Hall?'

'No one that I know of,' I answered, in some confusion; 'I only sought the *Orlando*.'

'It lies there,' said Miss Vernon, pointing to the table.

In removing one or two books to get at that which I pretended to seek, I was, in truth, meditating to make a handsome retreat from an investigation to which I felt my assurance inadequate, when I perceived a man's glove lying upon the table. My eyes encountered those of Miss Vernon, who blushed deeply.

'It is one of my relics,' she said, with hesitation, replying not to my words, but to my looks; 'it is one of the gloves of my grandfather, the original of the superb Vandyke which you admire.'

As if she thought something more than her bare assertion was necessary to prove her statement true, she opened a drawer of the large oaken table, and, taking out another glove, threw it towards me. When a temper naturally ingenuous stoops to equivocate or to dissemble, the anxious pain with which the unwonted task is laboured often induces the hearer to doubt the authenticity of the tale. I cast a hasty glance on both gloves, and then replied gravely — 'The gloves resemble each other, doubtless, in form and embroidery; but they cannot form a pair, since they both belong to the right hand.'

She bit her lip with anger, and again coloured deeply.

'You do right to expose me,' she replied, with bitterness; 'some friends would have only judged from what I said that I chose to give no particular explanation of a circumstance which calls for none — at least to a stranger. You have judged better, and have made me feel not only the meanness of duplicity, but my own inadequacy to sustain the task of a dissembler. I now tell you distinctly that that glove is not the fellow, as you have acutely discerned, to the one which I just now produced. It belongs to a friend yet dearer to me than the original of Vandyke's picture — a friend by whose counsels I have been, and will be, guided — whom I honour — whom I ——' She paused.

I was irritated at her manner, and filled up the blank in my own way. 'Whom she *loves*, Miss Vernon would say?'

'And if I do say so,' she replied, haughtily, 'by whom shall my affection be called to account?'

'Not by me, Miss Vernon, assuredly. I entreat you to hold me acquitted of such presumption. *But*,' I continued, with

some emphasis, for I was now piqued in return, 'I hope Miss Vernon will pardon a friend, from whom she seems disposed to withdraw the title, for observing ——'

'Observe nothing, sir,' she interrupted, with some vehemence, 'except that I will neither be doubted nor questioned. There does not exist one by whom I will be either interrogated or judged; and if you sought this unusual time of presenting yourself in order to spy upon my privacy, the friendship or interest with which you pretend to regard me is a poor excuse for your uncivil curiosity.'

'I relieve you of my presence,' said I, with pride equal to her own; for my temper has ever been a stranger to stooping, even in cases where my feelings were most deeply interested — 'I relieve you of my presence. I awake from a pleasant but a most delusive dream; and — but we understand each other.'

I had reached the door of the apartment when Miss Vernon, whose movements were sometimes so rapid as to seem almost instinctive, overtook me, and, catching hold of my arm, stopped me with that air of authority which she could so whimsically assume, and which, from the naïveté and simplicity of her manner, had an effect so peculiarly interesting.

'Stop, Mr. Frank,' she said; 'you are not to leave me in that way neither; I am not so amply provided with friends that I can afford to throw away even the ungrateful and the selfish. Mark what I say, Mr. Francis Osbaldistone. You shall know nothing of this mysterious glove,' and she held it up as she spoke — 'nothing; no, not a single iota more than you know already; and yet I will not permit it to be a gauntlet of strife and defiance betwixt us. My time here,' she said, sinking into a tone somewhat softer, 'must necessarily be very short; yours must be still shorter. We are soon to part, never to meet again; do not let us quarrel, or make any mysterious miseries the pretext for farther embittering the few hours we shall ever pass together on this side of eternity.'

I do not know, Tresham, by what witchery this fascinating creature obtained such complete management over a temper which I cannot at all times manage myself. I had determined, on entering the library, to seek a complete explanation with Miss Vernon. I had found that she refused it with indignant defiance, and avowed to my face the preference of a rival; for what other construction could I put on her declared preference of her mysterious confidant? And yet, while I was on the point of leaving the apartment and breaking with her for ever,



"I HOPE MISS VERNON WILL PARDON A FRIEND."
From a painting by Herdman.

it cost her but a change of look and tone, from that of real and haughty resentment to that of kind and playful despotism, again shaded off into melancholy and serious feeling, to lead me back to my seat, her willing subject on her own hard terms.

'What does this avail?' said I, as I sat down. 'What can this avail, Miss Vernon? Why should I witness embarrassments which I cannot relieve, and mysteries which I offend you even by attempting to penetrate? Inexperienced as you are in the world, you must still be aware that a beautiful young woman can have but one male friend. Even in a male friend I should be jealous of a confidence shared with a third party unknown and concealed; but with *you*, Miss Vernon —'

'You are, of course, jealous, in all the tenses and moods of that amiable passion? But, my good friend, you have all this time spoke nothing but the paltry gossip which simpletons repeat from play-books and romances, till they give mere cant a real and powerful influence over their minds. Boys and girls prate themselves into love; and when their love is like to fall asleep they prate and tease themselves into jealousy. But you and I, Frank, are rational beings, and neither silly nor idle enough to talk ourselves into any other relation than that of plain honest disinterested friendship. Any other union is as far out of our reach as if I were man or you woman. To speak truth,' she added, after a moment's hesitation, 'even though I am so complaisant to the decorum of my sex as to blush a little at my own plain dealing, we cannot marry if we would, and we ought not if we could.'

And certainly, Tresham, she did blush most angelically as she made this cruel declaration. I was about to attack both her positions, entirely forgetting those very suspicions which had been confirmed in the course of the evening, but she proceeded with a cold firmness which approached to severity.

'What I say is sober and indisputable truth, on which I will neither hear question nor explanation. We are therefore friends, Mr. Osbaldistone, are we not?' She held out her hand and, taking mine, added — 'And nothing to each other now or henceforward except as friends.'

She let go my hand. I sunk it and my head at once, fairly *overcrowded*, as Spenser would have termed it, by the mingled kindness and firmness of her manner. She hastened to change the subject.

'Here is a letter,' she said, 'directed for you, Mr. Osbaldistone, very duly and distinctly; but which, notwithstanding

the caution of the person who wrote and addressed it, might perhaps never have reached your hands, had it not fallen into the possession of a certain Pacolet or enchanted dwarf of mine, whom, like all distressed damsels of romance, I retain in my secret service.'

I opened the letter and glanced over the contents; the unfolded sheet of paper dropped from my hands, with the involuntary exclamation of 'Gracious Heaven! my folly and disobedience have ruined my father!'

Miss Vernon rose with looks of real and affectionate alarm — 'You grow pale, you are ill; shall I bring you a glass of water? Be a man, Mr. Osbaldistone, and a firm one. Is your father — is he no more?'

'He lives,' said I, 'thank God! but to what distress and difficulty —'

'If that be all, despair not. May I read this letter?' she said, taking it up.

I assented, hardly knowing what I said. She read it with great attention.

'Who is this Mr. Tresham who signs the letter?'

'My father's partner (your own good father, Will), but he is little in the habit of acting personally in the business of the house.'

'He writes here,' said Miss Vernon, 'of various letters sent to you previously.'

'I have received none of them,' I replied.

'And it appears,' she continued, 'that Rashleigh, who has taken the full management of affairs during your father's absence in Holland, has some time since left London for Scotland, with effects and remittances to take up large bills granted by your father to persons in that country, and that he has not since been heard of.'

'It is but too true.'

'And here has been,' she added, looking at the letter, 'a head clerk, or some such person — Owenson — Owen — despatched to Glasgow to find out Rashleigh, if possible, and you are entreated to repair to the same place and assist him in his researches.'

'It is even so, and I must depart instantly.'

'Stay but one moment,' said Miss Vernon. 'It seems to me that the worst which can come of this matter will be the loss of a certain sum of money; and can that bring tears into your eyes? For shame, Mr. Osbaldistone!'

'You do me injustice, Miss Vernon,' I answered. 'I grieve not for the loss, but for the effect which I know it will produce on the spirits and health of my father, to whom mercantile credit is as honour; and who, if declared insolvent, would sink into the grave, oppressed by a sense of grief, remorse, and despair, like that of a soldier convicted of cowardice, or a man of honour who had lost his rank and character in society. All this I might have prevented by a trifling sacrifice of the foolish pride and indolence which recoiled from sharing the labours of his honourable and useful profession. Good Heaven! how shall I redeem the consequences of my error?'

'By instantly repairing to Glasgow, as you are conjured to do by the friend who writes this letter.'

'But if Rashleigh,' said I, 'has really formed this base and unconscientious scheme of plundering his benefactor, what prospect is there that I can find means of frustrating a plan so deeply laid?'

'The prospect,' she replied, 'indeed, may be uncertain; but, on the other hand, there is no possibility of your doing any service to your father by remaining here. Remember, had you been on the post destined for you this disaster could not have happened; hasten to that which is now pointed out, and it may possibly be retrieved. Yet stay — do not leave this room until I return.'

She left me in confusion and amazement; amid which, however, I could find a lucid interval to admire the firmness, composure, and presence of mind which Miss Vernon seemed to possess on every crisis, however sudden.

In a few minutes she returned with a sheet of paper in her hand, folded and sealed like a letter, but without address. 'I trust you,' she said, 'with this proof of my friendship, because I have the most perfect confidence in your honour. If I understand the nature of your distress rightly, the funds in Rashleigh's possession must be recovered by a certain day — the 12th of September, I think, is named — in order that they may be applied to pay the bills in question; and, consequently, that if adequate funds be provided before that period your father's credit is safe from the apprehended calamity.'

'Certainly; I so understand Mr. Tresham.' I looked at your father's letter again, and added, 'There cannot be a doubt of it.'

'Well,' said Diana, 'in that case my little Pacolet may be of use to you. You have heard of a spell contained in a letter.'

Take this packet; do not open it until other and ordinary means have failed; if you succeed by your own exertions, I trust to your honour for destroying it without opening or suffering it to be opened. But if not, you may break the seal within ten days of the fated day, and you will find directions which may possibly be of service to you. Adieu, Frank; we never meet more; but sometimes think on your friend Die Vernon.

She extended her hand, but I clasped her to my bosom. She sighed as she extricated herself from the embrace which she permitted, escaped to the door which led to her own apartment, and I saw her no more.

CHAPTER XVIII

And hurry, hurry, off they rode,
As fast as fast might be;
Hurra, hurra, the dead can ride,
Dost fear to ride with me?

BÜRGER.

THERE is one advantage in an accumulation of evils differing in cause and character, that the distraction which they afford by their contradictory operation prevents the patient from being overwhelmed under either. I was deeply grieved at my separation from Miss Vernon, yet not so much so as I should have been had not my father's apprehended distresses forced themselves on my attention; and I was distressed by the news of Mr. Tresham, yet less so than if they had fully occupied my mind. I was neither a false lover nor an unfeeling son; but man can give but a certain portion of distressful emotions to the causes which demand them, and if two operate at once our sympathy, like the funds of a compounding bankrupt, can only be divided between them. Such were my reflections when I gained my apartment — it seems, from the illustration, they already began to have a twang of commerce in them.

I set myself seriously to consider your father's letter. It was not very distinct; and referred for several particulars to Owen, whom I was entreated to meet with as soon as possible at a Scotch town called Glasgow; being informed, moreover, that my old friend was to be heard of at Messrs. MacVittie, MacFin, and Company, merchants in the Gallowgate of the said town. It likewise alluded to several letters, which, as it appeared to me, must have miscarried or have been intercepted, and complained of my obdurate silence in terms which would have been highly unjust had my letters reached their purposed destination. I was amazed as I read. That the spirit of Rashleigh walked around me, and conjured up these doubts and difficulties by which I was surrounded, I could not

doubt for one instant; yet it was frightful to conceive the extent of combined villainy and power which he must have employed in the perpetration of his designs. Let me do myself justice in one respect; the evil of parting from Miss Vernon, however distressing it might in other respects and at another time have appeared to me, sunk into a subordinate consideration when I thought of the dangers impending over my father. I did not myself set a high estimation on wealth, and had the affectation of most young men of lively imagination, who suppose that they can better dispense with the possession of money than resign their time and faculties to the labour necessary to acquire it. But in my father's case I knew that bankruptcy would be considered as an utter and irretrievable disgrace, to which life would afford no comfort, and death the speediest and sole relief.

My mind, therefore, was bent on averting this catastrophe, with an intensity which the interest could not have produced had it referred to my own fortunes; and the result of my deliberation was a firm resolution to depart from Osbaldistone Hall the next day, and wend my way without loss of time to meet Owen at Glasgow. I did not hold it expedient to intimate my departure to my uncle otherwise than by leaving a letter of thanks for his hospitality, assuring him that sudden and important business prevented my offering them in person. I knew the blunt old knight would readily excuse ceremony, and I had such a belief in the extent and decided character of Rashleigh's machinations, that I had some apprehension of his having provided means to intercept a journey which was undertaken with a view to disconcert them, if my departure were publicly announced at Osbaldistone Hall.

I therefore determined to set off on my journey with daylight in the ensuing morning, and to gain the neighbouring kingdom of Scotland before any idea of my departure was entertained at the Hall; but one impediment of consequence was likely to prevent that speed which was the soul of my expedition. I did not know the shortest, nor indeed any, road to Glasgow; and as, in the circumstances in which I stood, despatch was of the greatest consequence, I determined to consult Andrew Fairservice on the subject, as the nearest and most authentic authority within my reach. Late as it was, I set off with the intention of ascertaining this important point, and after a few minutes' walk reached the dwelling of the gardener.

Andrew's dwelling was situated at no great distance from

the exterior wall of the garden, a snug comfortable Northumbrian cottage, built of stones roughly dressed with the hammer, and having the windows and doors decorated with huge heavy architraves, or lintels, as they are called, of hewn stone, and its roof covered with broad grey flags, instead of slates, thatch, or tiles. A jargonel's pear-tree at one end of the cottage, a rivulet, and flower-plot of a rood in extent, in front, and a kitchen-garden behind; a paddock for a cow, and a small field, cultivated with several crops of grain, rather for the benefit of the cottager than for sale, announced the warm and cordial comforts which Old England, even at her most northern extremity, extends to her meanest inhabitants.

As I approached the mansion of the sapient Andrew, I heard a noise which, being of a nature peculiarly solemn, nasal, and prolonged, led me to think that Andrew, according to the decent and meritorious custom of his countrymen, had assembled some of his neighbours to join in family exercise, as he called evening devotion. Andrew had indeed neither wife, child, nor female inmate in his family. 'The first of his trade,' he said, 'had had enough o' thae cattle.' But, notwithstanding, he sometimes contrived to form an audience for himself out of the neighbouring Papists and Church-of-England men — brands, as he expressed it, snatched out of the burning, on whom he used to exercise his spiritual gifts, in defiance alike of Father Vaughan, Father Docharty, Rashleigh, and all the world of Catholics around him, who deemed his interference on such occasions an act of heretical interloping. I conceived it likely, therefore, that the well-disposed neighbours might have assembled to hold some chapel of ease of this nature. The noise, however, when I listened to it more accurately, seemed to proceed entirely from the lungs of the said Andrew; and when I interrupted it by entering the house I found Fairservice alone, combating as he best could with long words and hard names, and reading aloud, for the purpose of his own edification, a volume of controversial divinity. 'I was just taking a spell,' said he, laying aside the huge folio volume as I entered, 'of the worthy Doctor Lightfoot.'

'Lightfoot!' I replied, looking at the ponderous volume with some surprise; 'surely your author was unhappily named.'

'Lightfoot was his name, sir; a divine he was, and another kind of a divine than they hae nowadays. Always, I crave your pardon for keeping ye standing at the door, but having been mistrysted — Gude preserve us! — with ae bogle the night

already, I was dubious o' opening the yett till I had gaen through the e'ening worship; and I had just finished the fifth chapter of Nehemiah. If that winna gar them keep their distance I wotna what will.'

'Trysted with a bogle!' said I; 'what do you mean by that, Andrew?'

'I said mistrysted,' replied Andrew; 'that is as muckle as to say, fley'd wi' a ghaist — Gude preserve us, I say again!'

'Flay'd by a ghost, Andrew! how am I to understand that?'

'I did not say flay'd,' replied Andrew, 'but *fley'd*, that is, I got a fleg, and was ready to jump out o' my skin, though nae-body offered to whirl it aff my body as a man wad bark a tree.'

'I beg a truce to your terrors in the present case, Andrew, and I wish to know whether you can direct me the nearest way to a town in your country of Scotland called Glasgow?'

'A town ca'd Glasgow!' echoed Andrew Fairservice. 'Glasgow's a ceety, man. And is't the way to Glasgow ye were speering if I kend? What suld ail me to ken it? it's no that dooms far frae my ain parish of Dreepdaily, that lies a bittock farther to the west. But what may your honour be gaun to Glasgow for?'

'Particular business,' replied I.

'That's as muckle as to say, "speer nae questions, and I'll tell ye nae lees." To Glasgow?' He made a short pause. 'I am thinking ye wad be the better o' some ane to show you the road.'

'Certainly, if I could meet with any person going that way.'

'And your honour, doubtless, wad consider the time and trouble?'

'Unquestionably; my business is pressing, and if you can find any guide to accompany me I'll pay him handsomely.'

'This is no a day to speak o' carnal matters,' said Andrew, casting his eyes upwards; 'but if it were Sabbath at e'en, I wad speer what ye wad be content to gie to ane that wad bear ye pleasant company on the road, and tell ye the names of the gentlemen's and noblemen's seats and castles, and count their kin to ye?'

'I tell you, all I want to know is the road I must travel; I will pay the fellow to his satisfaction: I will give him anything in reason.'

'Ony thing,' replied Andrew, 'is naething; and this lad that I am speaking o' kens a' the short cuts and queer bye-paths through the hills, and ——'

'I have no time to talk about it, Andrew; do you make the bargain for me your own way.'

'Aha! that's speaking to the purpose,' answered Andrew. 'I am thinking, since sae be that sae it is, I'll be the lad that will guide you mysell.'

'You Andrew? how will you get away from your employment?'

'I tell'd your honour a while syne that it was lang that I hae been thinking o' flitting, maybe as lang as frae the first year I came to Osbaldistone Hall; and now I am o' the mind to gang in gude earnest. Better soon as syne; better a finger aff as aye wagging.'

'You leave your service then? But will you not lose your wages?'

'Nae doubt there will be a certain loss; but then I hae siller o' the laird's in my hands that I took for the apples in the auld orchyard; and a sair bargain the folk had that bought them — a wheen green trash. And yet Sir Hildebrand's as keen to hae the siller — that is, the steward is as pressing about it — as if they had been a' gowden pippins; and then there's the siller for the seeds — I'm thinking the wage will be in a manner decently made up. But doubtless your honour will consider my risk of loss when we won to Glasgow; and ye'll be for setting out forthwith?'

'By daybreak in the morning,' I answered.

'That's some, the suddenest; whare am I to find a naig? Stay — I'll find the beast that will answer me.'

'At five in the morning, then, Andrew, you will meet me at the head of the avenue.'

'Deil a fear o' me — that I suld say sae — missing my tryste,' replied Andrew, very briskly; 'and, if I might advise, we wad be aff twa hours earlier. I ken the way, dark or light, as weel as blind Ralph Ronaldson, that's travelled ower every moor in the country-side, and disna ken the colour of a heather-cowe when a's dune.'

I highly approve of Andrew's amendment on my original proposal, and we agreed to meet at the place appointed at three in the morning. At once, however, a reflection came across the mind of my intended travelling companion.

'The bogle! the bogle! what if it should come out upon us? I downa forgather wi' thae things twice in the four-and-twenty hours.'

'Pooh! pooh!' I exclaimed, breaking away from him, 'fear

nothing from the next world ; the earth contains living fiends who can act for themselves without assistance, were the whole host that fell with Lucifer to return to aid and abet them.'

With these words, the import of which was suggested by my own situation, I left Andrew's habitation and returned to the Hall.

I made the few preparations which were necessary for my proposed journey, examined and loaded my pistols, and then threw myself on my bed, to obtain, if possible, a brief sleep before the fatigue of a long and anxious journey. Nature, exhausted by the tumultuous agitations of the day, was kinder to me than I expected, and I sunk into a deep and profound slumber, from which, however, I started as the old clock struck two from a turret adjoining to my bedchamber. I instantly arose, struck a light, wrote the letter I proposed to leave for my uncle, and, leaving behind me such articles of dress as were cumbrous in carriage, I deposited the rest of my wardrobe in my valise, glided downstairs, and gained the stable without impediment. Without being quite such a groom as any of my cousins, I had learned at Osbaldistone Hall to dress and saddle my own horse, and in a few minutes I was mounted and ready for my sally.

As I paced up the old avenue, on which the waning moon threw its light with a pale and whitish tinge, I looked back with a deep and boding sigh towards the walls which contained Diana Vernon, under the despondent impression that we had probably parted to meet no more. It was impossible, among the long and irregular lines of Gothic casements, which now looked ghastly white in the moonlight, to distinguish that of the apartment which she inhabited. 'She is lost to me already,' thought I, as my eye wandered over the dim and indistinguishable intricacies of architecture offered by the moonlight view of Osbaldistone Hall — 'she is lost to me already, ere I have left the place which she inhabits ! What hope is there of my maintaining any correspondence with her when leagues shall lie between ?'

While I paused in a reverie of no very pleasing nature, the 'iron tongue of time told three upon the drowsy ear of night,' and reminded me of the necessity of keeping my appointment with a person of a less interesting description and appearance — Andrew Fairservice.

At the gate of the avenue I found a horseman stationed in the shadow of the wall, but it was not until I had coughed

twice, and then called 'Andrew,' that the horticulturist replied, 'I'se warrant it's Andrew.'

'Lead the way, then,' said I, 'and be silent if you can till we are past the hamlet in the valley.'

Andrew led the way accordingly, and at a much brisker pace than I would have recommended; and so well did he obey my injunctions of keeping silence, that he would return no answer to my repeated inquiries into the cause of such unnecessary haste. Extricating ourselves by short cuts known to Andrew from the numerous stony lanes and bye-paths which intersected each other in the vicinity of the Hall, we reached the open heath; and riding swiftly across it, took our course among the barren hills which divide England from Scotland on what are called the Middle Marches. The way, or rather the broken track which we occupied, was a happy interchange of bog and shingles; nevertheless, Andrew relented nothing of his speed, but trotted manfully forward at the rate of eight or ten miles an hour. I was surprised and provoked at the fellow's obstinate persistence, for we made abrupt ascents and descents over ground of a very break-neck character, and traversed the edge of precipices where a slip of the horse's feet would have consigned the rider to certain death. The moon, at best, afforded a dubious and imperfect light; but in some places we were so much under the shade of the mountain as to be in total darkness, and then I could only trace Andrew by the clatter of his horse's feet and the fire which they struck from the flints. At first this rapid motion, and the attention which, for the sake of personal safety, I was compelled to give to the conduct of my horse, was of service by forcibly diverting my thoughts from the various painful reflections which must otherwise have pressed on my mind. But at length, after hallooing repeatedly to Andrew to ride slower, I became seriously incensed at his impudent perseverance in refusing either to obey or to reply to me. My anger was, however, quite impotent. I attempted once or twice to get up alongside of my self-willed guide, with the purpose of knocking him off his horse with the butt-end of my whip; but Andrew was better mounted than I, and either the spirit of the animal which he bestrode, or more probably some presentiment of my kind intentions towards him, induced him to quicken his pace whenever I attempted to make up to him. On the other hand, I was compelled to exert my spurs to keep him in sight, for without his guidance I was too well aware

that I should never find my way through the howling wilderness which we now traversed at such an unwonted pace. I was so angry at length that I threatened to have recourse to my pistols, and send a bullet after the Hotspur Andrew which should stop his fiery-footed career, if he did not abate it of his own accord. Apparently this threat made some impression on the tympanum of his ear, however deaf to all my milder entreaties; for he relaxed his pace upon hearing it, and, suffering me to close up to him, observed, 'There wasna muckle sense in riding at sic a daft-like gate.'

'And what did you mean by doing so at all, you self-willed scoundrel?' replied I; for I was in a towering passion, to which, by the way, nothing contributes more than the having recently undergone a spice of personal fear, which, like a few drops of water flung on a glowing fire, is sure to inflame the ardour which it is insufficient to quench.

'What's your honour's wull?' replied Andrew, with impenetrable gravity.

'My will, you rascal? I have been roaring to you this hour to ride slower, and you have never so much as answered me. Are you drunk or mad to behave so?'

'An it like your honour, I am something dull o' hearing; and I'll no deny but I might have maybe taen a stirrup-cup at parting frae the auld bigging whare I hae dwalt sae lang; and having naeboddy to pledge, nae doubt I was obliged to do mysell reason, or else leave the end o' the brandy stoup to thae Papists; and that wad be a waste, as your honour kens.'

This might be all very true, and my circumstances required that I should be on good terms with my guide; I therefore satisfied myself with requiring of him to take his directions from me in future concerning the rate of travelling.

Andrew, emboldened by the mildness of my tone, elevated his own into the pedantic, conceited octave which was familiar to him on most occasions.

'Your honour wiuna persuade me, and naeboddy shall persuade me, that it's either halesome or prudent to tak the night air on thae moors without a cordial o' clow-gilliflower water, or a tass of brandy or aquavita, or sic-like creature comfort. I hae taen the bent ower the Otterscape Rigg a hundred times, day and night, and never could find the way unless I had taen my morning; mair by token that I had whiles twa bits o' ankers o' brandy on ilk side o' me.'

'In other words, Andrew,' said I, 'you were a smuggler;

how does a man of your strict principles reconcile yourself to cheat the revenue ?'

'It's a mere spoiling o' the Egyptians,' replied Andrew. 'Puir auld Scotland suffers eneugh by thae blackguard loons o' excise-men and gaugers, that hae come down on her like locusts since the sad and sorrowfu' Union ; it's the part of a kind son to bring her a soup o' something that will keep up her auld heart, and that will they nill they, the ill-fa'ard thieves.'

Upon more particular inquiry, I found Andrew had frequently travelled these mountain-paths as a smuggler, both before and after his establishment at Osbaldistone Hall ; a circumstance which was so far of importance to me, as it proved his capacity as a guide, notwithstanding the escapade of which he had been guilty at his outset. Even now, though travelling at a more moderate pace, the stirrup-cup, or whatever else had such an effect in stimulating Andrew's motions, seemed not totally to have lost its influence. He often cast a nervous and startled look behind him ; and whenever the road seemed at all practicable, showed symptoms of a desire to accelerate his pace, as if he feared some pursuit from the rear. These appearances of alarm gradually diminished as we reached the top of a high bleak ridge, which ran nearly east and west for about a mile, with a very steep descent on either side. The pale beams of the morning were now enlightening the horizon when Andrew cast a look behind him, and not seeing the appearance of a living being on the moors which he had travelled, his hard features gradually unbent, as he first whistled, then sung, with much glee and little melody, the end of one of his native songs :

'Jenny, lass ! I think I hae her
Ower the moor amang the heather ;
All their clan shall never get her.'

He patted at the same time the neck of the horse which had carried him so gallantly ; and my attention being directed by that action to the animal, I instantly recognised a favourite mare of Thorncliff Osbaldistone. 'How is this, sir ?' said I, sternly ; 'that is Mr. Thorncliff's mare !'

'I'll no say but she may aiblins hae been his honour's Squire Thorncliff's in her day ; but she's mine now.'

'You have stolen her, you rascal.'

'Na, na, sir, nae man can wyte me wi' theft. The thing stands this gate, ye see : Squire Thorncliff borrowed ten pounds o' me to gang to York races ; deil a boddle wad he pay me

back again, and spake o' raddling my banes, as he ca'd it, when I asked him but for my ain back again. Now I think it will riddle him or he gets his horse ower the Border again; unless he pays me plack and bawbee, he sall never see a hair o' her tail. I ken a canny chield at Loughmaben, a bit writer lad, that will put me in the way to sort him. Steal the mear! na, na, far be the sin o' theft frae Andrew Fairservice; I have just arrested her *jurisdictiones jandandy causey*. Thae are bonny writer words — amaist like the language o' huz gardeners and other learned men. It's a pity they're sae dear: thae three words were a' that Andrew got for a lang law-plea, and four ankers o' as gude brandy as was e'er coupit ower craig. Hech, sirs! but law's a dear thing.'

'You are likely to find it much dearer than you suppose, Andrew, if you proceed in this mode of paying yourself without legal authority.'

'Hout tout, we're in Scotland now — be praised for't! — and I can find baith friends and lawyers, and judges too, as weel as ony Osbaldistone o' them a'. My mither's mither's third cousin was cousin to the provost o' Dumfries, and he winna see a drap o' her blude wrangled. Hout awa, the laws are indifferently administered here to a' men alike; it's no like on yon side, when a chield may be whuppit awa' wi' ane o' Clerk Jobson's warrants afore he kens where he is. But they will hae little enough law amang them by and by and that is ae grand reason that I hae gien them gude day.'

I was highly provoked at the achievement of Andrew, and considered it as a hard fate which a second time threw me into collision with a person of such irregular practices. I determined, however, to buy the mare of him when we should reach the end of our journey, and send her back to my cousin at Osbaldistone Hall; and with this purpose of reparation I resolved to make my uncle acquainted from the next post-town. It was needless, I thought, to quarrel with Andrew in the meantime, who had, after all, acted not very unnaturally for a person in his circumstances. I therefore smothered my resentment, and asked him wha he meant by his last expressions, that there would be little law in Northumberland by and by.

'Law,' said Andrew, 'hout, ay; there will be club-law enough. The priests and the Irish officers, and thae Papist cattle that hae been sodgering abroad because they durstna bide at hame, are a' fleeing thick in Northumberland e'enow, and thae corbies dinna gather without they smell carrion. As

sure as ye live, his honour Sir Hildebrand is gaun to stick his horn in the bog ; there's naething but gun and pistol, sword and dagger amang them, and they'll be laying on, I'se warrant ; for they're fearless fules the young Osbaldistone squires, aye craving your honour's pardon.'

This speech recalled to my memory some suspicions that I myself had entertained that the Jacobites were on the eve of some desperate enterprise. But, conscious it did not become me to be a spy on my uncle's words and actions, I had rather avoided than availed myself of any opportunity which occurred of remarking upon the signs of the times. Andrew Fairservice felt no such restraint, and doubtless spoke very truly in stating his conviction that some desperate plots were in agitation as a reason which determined his resolution to leave the Hall.

'The servants,' he stated, 'with the tenantry and others, had been all regularly enrolled and mustered, and they wanted me to take arms also. But I'll ride in nae siccan troop ; they little kend Andrew that asked him. I'll fight when I like myself, but it sall neither be for the hure o' Babylon nor ony hure in England.'

CHAPTER XIX

Where longs to fall yon rifted spire,
As weary of the insulting air, —
The poet's thoughts, the warrior's fire,
The lover's sighs, are sleeping there.

LANGHORNE.

AT the first Scotch town which we reached my guide sought out his friend and counsellor, to consult upon the proper and legal means of converting into his own lawful property the 'bonny creature' which was at present his own only by one of those slight-of-hand arrangements which still sometimes took place in that once lawless district. I was somewhat diverted with the dejection of his looks on his return. He had, it seems, been rather too communicative to his confidential friend, the attorney; and learned with great dismay, in return for his unsuspecting frankness, that Mr. Touthope had during his absence been appointed clerk to the peace of the county, and was bound to communicate to justice all such achievements as that of his friend, Mr. Andrew Fairservice. There was a necessity, this alert member of the police stated, for arresting the horse and placing him in Bailie Trumbull's stable, therein to remain at livery, at the rate of twelve shillings (Scotch) per diem, until the question of property was duly tried and debated. He even talked as if, in strict and rigorous execution of his duty, he ought to detain honest Andrew himself; but on my guide's most piteously entreating his forbearance, he not only desisted from this proposal, but made a present to Andrew of a broken-winded and spavined pony, in order to enable him to pursue his journey. It is true, he qualified this act of generosity by exacting from poor Andrew an absolute cession of his right and interest in the gallant palfrey of Thorncliff Osbaldistone; a transference which Mr. Touthope represented as of very little consequence, since his unfortunate friend, as he

facetiously observed, was likely to get nothing of the mare excepting the halter.

Andrew seemed woeful and disconcerted, as I screwed out of him these particulars; for his northern pride was cruelly pinched by being compelled to admit that attorneys were attorneys on both sides of the Tweed, and that Mr. Clerk Touthope was not a farthing more sterling coin than Mr. Clerk Jobson.

'It wadna hae vexed him half sae muckle to hae been cheated out o' what might amaisht be said to be won with the peril o' his craig had it happened amang the Englishers; but it was an unco thing to see hawks pike out hawks' een, or ae kindly Scot cheat anither. But nae doubt things were strangely changed in his country sin' the sad and sorrowfu' Union'; an event to which Andrew referred every symptom of depravity or degeneracy which he remarked among his countrymen, more especially the inflammation of reckonings, the diminished size of pint-stoups, and other grievances, which he pointed out to me during our journey.

For my own part, I held myself, as things had turned out, acquitted of all charge of the mare, and wrote to my uncle the circumstances under which she was carried into Scotland, concluding with informing him that she was in the hands of justice and her worthy representatives, Bailie Trumbull and Mr. Clerk Touthope, to whom I referred him for farther particulars. Whether the property returned to the Northumbrian fox-hunter, or continued to bear the person of the Scottish attorney, it is unnecessary for me at present to say.

We now pursued our journey to the north-westward, at a rate much slower than that at which we had achieved our nocturnal retreat from England. One chain of barren and uninteresting hills succeeded another, until the more fertile vale of Clyde opened upon us; and with such despatch as we might we gained the town, or, as my guide pertinaciously termed it, the city, of Glasgow. Of late years, I understand, it has fully deserved the name which, by a sort of political second-sight, my guide assigned to it. An extensive and increasing trade with the West Indies and American colonies has, if I am rightly informed, laid the foundation of wealth and prosperity, which, if carefully strengthened and built upon, may one day support an immense fabric of commercial prosperity; but in the earlier time of which I speak the dawn of this splendour had not arisen. The Union had, indeed, opened to Scotland the trade of the English colonies; but, betwixt

want of capital and the national jealousy of the English, the merchants of Scotland were as yet excluded in a great measure from the exercise of the privileges which that memorable treaty conferred on them. Glasgow lay on the wrong side of the island for participating in the east-country or continental trade, by which the trifling commerce as yet possessed by Scotland chiefly supported itself. Yet, though she then gave small promise of the commercial eminence to which, I am informed, she seems now likely one day to attain, Glasgow, as the principal central town of the western district of Scotland, was a place of considerable rank and importance. The broad and brimming Clyde, which flows so near its walls, gave the means of an inland navigation of some importance. Not only the fertile plains in its immediate neighbourhood, but the districts of Ayr and Dumfries, regarded Glasgow as their capital, to which they transmitted their produce, and received in return such necessaries and luxuries as their consumption required.

The dusky mountains of the Western Highlands often sent forth wilder tribes to frequent the marts of St. Mungo's favourite city. Hordes of wild, shaggy, dwarfish cattle and ponies, conducted by Highlanders as wild, as shaggy, and sometimes as dwarfish as the animals they had in charge, often traversed the streets of Glasgow. Strangers gazed with surprise on the antique and fantastic dress, and listened to the unknown and dissonant sounds of their language, while the mountaineers, armed even while engaged in this peaceful occupation with musket and pistol, sword, dagger, and target, stared with astonishment on the articles of luxury of which they knew not the use, and with an avidity which seemed somewhat alarming on the articles which they knew and valued. It is always with unwillingness that the Highlander quits his deserts, and at this early period it was like tearing a pine from its rock to plant him elsewhere. Yet even then the mountain glens were overpeopled, although thinned occasionally by famine or by the sword, and many of their inhabitants strayed down to Glasgow, there formed settlements, there sought and found employment, although different, indeed, from that of their native hills. This supply of a hardy and useful population was of consequence to the prosperity of the place, furnished the means of carrying on the few manufactures which the town already boasted, and laid the foundation of its future prosperity.

The exterior of the city corresponded with these promising circumstances. The principal street was broad and important,

decorated with public buildings of an architecture rather striking than correct in point of taste, and running between rows of tall houses built of stone, the fronts of which were occasionally richly ornamented with mason-work; a circumstance which gave the street an imposing air of dignity and grandeur, of which most English towns are in some measure deprived by the slight, unsubstantial, and perishable quality and appearance of the bricks with which they are constructed.

In the western metropolis of Scotland my guide and I arrived on a Saturday evening, too late to entertain thoughts of business of any kind. We alighted at the door of a jolly hostler-wife, as Andrew called her, the 'Ostelero' of old father Chaucer, by whom we were civilly received.

On the following morning the bells pealed from every steeple, announcing the sanctity of the day. Notwithstanding, however, what I had heard of the severity with which the Sabbath is observed in Scotland, my first impulse, not unnaturally, was to seek out Owen; but on inquiry I found that my attempt would be in vain 'until kirk-time was ower.' Not only did my landlady and guide jointly assure me that 'there wadna be a living soul either in the counting house or dwelling-house of Messrs. MacVittie, MacFin, and Company,' to which Owen's letter referred me, but, moreover, 'far less would I find any of the partners there. They were serious men, and wad be where a' gude Christians ought to be at sic a time, and that was in the Barony Iaigh Kirk.'

Andrew Fairservice, whose disgust at the law of his country had fortunately not extended itself to the other learned professions of his native land, now sung forth the praises of the preacher who was to perform the duty, to which my hostess replied with many loud amens. The result was, that I determined to go to this popular place of worship, as much with the purpose of learning, if possible, whether Owen had arrived in Glasgow, as with any great expectation of edification. My hopes were exalted by the assurance that, if Mr. Ephraim MacVittie — worthy man! — were in the land of life he would surely honour the Barony Kirk that day with his presence; and if he chanced to have a stranger within his gates, doubtless he would bring him to the duty along with him. This probability determined my motions, and, under the escort of my faithful Andrew, I set forth for the Barony Kirk.

On this occasion, however, I had little need of his guidance;

¹ See Note 4.

for the crowd which forced its way up a steep and rough paved street to hear the most popular preacher in the west of Scotland would of itself have swept me along with it. On attaining the summit of the hill we turned to the left, and a large pair of folding doors admitted us, amongst others, into the open and extensive burying-place which surrounds the minster or cathedral church of Glasgow. The pile is of a gloomy and massive, rather than of an elegant, style of Gothic architecture; but its peculiar character is so strongly preserved, and so well suited with the accompaniments that surround it, that the impression of the first view was awful and solemn in the extreme. I was indeed so much struck that I resisted for a few minutes all Andrew's efforts to drag me into the interior of the building, so deeply was I engaged in surveying its outward character.

Situated in a populous and considerable town, this ancient and massive pile has the appearance of the most sequestered solitude. High walls divide it from the buildings of the city on one side; on the other it is bounded by a ravine, at the bottom of which, and invisible to the eye, murmurs a wandering rivulet, adding by its gentle noise to the imposing solemnity of the scene. On the opposite side of the ravine rises a steep bank, covered with fir-trees closely planted, whose dusky shade extends itself over the cemetery with an appropriate and gloomy effect. The churchyard itself had a peculiar character; for though in reality extensive, it is small in proportion to the number of respectable inhabitants who are interred within it, and whose graves are almost all covered with tombstones. There is therefore no room for the long rank grass which in most cases partially clothes the surface of those retreats where the wicked cease from troubling and the weary are at rest. The broad flat monumental stones are placed so close to each other that the precincts appear to be flagged with them, and, though roofed only by the heavens, resemble the floor of one of our old English churches, where the pavement is covered with sepulchral inscriptions. The contents of these sad records of mortality, the vain sorrows which they preserve, the stern lesson which they teach of the nothingness of humanity, the extent of ground which they so closely cover, and their uniform and melancholy tenor, reminded me of the roll of the prophet, which was 'written within and without, and there was written therein lamentations and mourning and woe.'

The cathedral itself corresponds in impressive majesty with these accompaniments. We feel that its appearance is heavy, yet that the effect produced would be destroyed were it lighter or more ornamental. It is the only metropolitan church in Scotland, excepting, as I am informed, the cathedral of Kirkwall, in the Orkneys, which remained uninjured at the Reformation; and Andrew Fairservice, who saw with great pride the effect which it produced upon my mind, thus accounted for its preservation: 'Ah! it's a brave kirk — nane o' yere whigmaleeries and curliewurlics and open-steek hems about it — a' solid, weel-jointed mason-wark, that will stand as lang as the warld, keep hands and gunpowther aff it. It had amaisht a douncome lang syne at the Reformation, when they pu'd doun the kirks of St. Andrews and Perth and thereawa', to cleanse them o' papery, and idolatry, and image worship, and surplices, and sic like rags o' the muckle hure that sitteth on seven hills, as if ane wasna braid enough for her auld hinder end. Sae the commons o' Renfrew, and o' the Barony, and the Gorbals, and a' about, they behoved to come into Glasgow ae fair morning to try their hand on purging the High Kirk o' Popish nick-nackets. But the townsmen o' Glasgow, they were feared their auld edifice might slip the girths in gaun through siccan rough physic, sae they rang the common bell and assembled the train-bands wi' took o' drum — by good luck, the worthy James Rabat was dean o' guild that year; and a gude mason he was himsell, made him the keener to keep up the auld bigging — and the trades assembled, and offered downright battle to the commons, rather than their kirk should coup the crans, as others had done elsewhere. It wasna for luv o' paperie; na, na! nane could ever say that o' the trades o' Glasgow. Sae they sune came to an agreement to take a' the idolatrous statues of sants — sorrow be on them! — out o' their neuks. And sae the bits o' stane idols were broken in pieces by Scripture warrant, and flung into the Molendinar burn, and the auld kirk stood as crouse as a cat when the flaes are kaimed aff her, and a'budy was alike pleased. And I hae heard wise folk say that if the same had been done in ilka kirk in Scotland the Reform wad just hae been as pure as it is e'en now, and we wad hae mair Christian-like kirks; for I hae been sae lang in England that naething will drive't out o' my head that the dog-kennel at Osbaldistone Hall is better than mony a house o' God in Scotland.'

Thus saying, Andrew led the way into the place of worship.

CHAPTER XX

It strikes an awe
And terror on my aching sight; the tombs
And monumental caves of death look cold,
And shoot a chillness to the trembling heart.

Mourning Bride.

NOTWITHSTANDING the impatience of my conductor, I could not forbear to pause and gaze for some minutes on the exterior of the building, rendered more impressively dignified by the solitude which ensued when its hitherto open gates were closed, after having, as it were, devoured the multitudes which had lately crowded the churchyard, but now, inclosed within the building, were engaged, as the choral swell of voices from within announced to us, in the solemn exercises of devotion. The sound of so many voices, united by the distance into one harmony, and freed from those harsh discordances which jar the ear when heard more near, combining with the murmuring brook and the wind which sung among the old firs, affected me with a sense of sublimity. All nature, as invoked by the Psalmist whose verses they chanted, seemed united in offering that solemn praise in which trembling is mixed with joy as she addresses her Maker. I had heard the service of high mass in France, celebrated with all the *éclat* which the choicest music, the richest dresses, the most imposing ceremonies could confer on it; yet it fell short in effect of the simplicity of the Presbyterian worship. The devotion, in which every one took a share, seemed so superior to that which was recited by musicians as a lesson which they had learned by rote, that it gave the Scottish worship all the advantage of reality over acting.

As I lingered to catch more of the solemn sound, Andrew, whose impatience became ungovernable, pulled me by the sleeve—'Come awa', sir—come awa', we maunna be late o' gaun in to disturb the worship; if we bide here the searchers

will be on us, and carry us to the guard-house for being idlers in kirk-time.'

Thus admonished, I followed my guide, but not, as I had supposed, into the body of the cathedral. 'This gate—this gate, sir!' he exclaimed, dragging me off as I made towards the main entrance of the building. 'There's but cauldrie law-wark gaun on yonder—carnal morality, as dow'd and as fusionless as rue leaves at Yule. Here's the real savour of doctrine.'

So saying, we entered a small low-arched door, secured by a wicket, which a grave-looking person seemed on the point of closing, and descended several steps as if into the funeral vaults beneath the church. It was even so; for in these subterranean precincts, why chosen for such a purpose I knew not, was established a very singular place of worship.

Conceive, Tresham, an extensive range of low-browed, dark, and twilight vaults, such as are used for sepulchres in other countries, and had long been dedicated to the same purpose in this, a portion of which was seated with pews and used as a church. The part of the vaults thus occupied, though capable of containing a congregation of many hundreds, bore a small proportion to the darker and more extensive caverns which yawned around what may be termed the inhabited space. In those waste regions of oblivion dusky banners and tattered escutcheons indicated the graves of those who were once, doubtless, 'princes in Israel.' Inscriptions, which could only be read by the painful antiquary, in language as obsolete as the act of devotional charity which they implored, invited the passengers to pray for the souls of those whose bodies rested beneath. Surrounded by these receptacles of the last remains of mortality, I found a numerous congregation engaged in the act of prayer. The Scotch perform this duty in a standing instead of a kneeling posture, more, perhaps, to take as broad a distinction as possible from the ritual of Rome than for any better reason, since I have observed that in their family worship, as doubtless in their private devotions, they adopt, in their immediate address to the Deity, that posture which other Christians use as the humblest and most reverential. Standing, therefore, the men being uncovered, a crowd of several hundreds of both sexes and all ages listened with great reverence and attention to the extempore, at least the unwritten, prayer of an aged clergyman,¹ who was very popular in the city.

¹ See Note 5.

Educated in the same religious persuasion, I seriously bent my mind to join in the devotion of the day, and it was not till the congregation resumed their seats that my attention was diverted to the consideration of the appearance of all around me.

At the conclusion of the prayer most of the men put on their hats or bonnets, and all who had the happiness to have seats sate down. Andrew and I were not of this number, having been too late of entering the church to secure such accommodation. We stood among a number of other persons in the same situation, forming a sort of ring around the seated part of the congregation. Behind and around us were the vaults I have already described ; before us the devout audience, dimly shown by the light which streamed on their faces through one or two low Gothic windows, such as give air and light to charnel-houses. By this were seen the usual variety of countenances which are generally turned towards a Scotch pastor on such occasions, almost all composed to attention, unless where a father or mother here and there recalls the wandering eyes of a lively child, or disturbs the slumbers of a dull one. The high-boned and harsh countenance of the nation, with the expression of intelligence and shrewdness which it frequently exhibits, is seen to more advantage in the act of devotion or in the ranks of war than on lighter and more cheerful occasions of assemblage. The discourse of the preacher was well qualified to call forth the various feelings and faculties of his audience.

Age and infirmities had impaired the powers of a voice originally strong and sonorous. He read his text with a pronunciation somewhat inarticulate ; but when he closed the Bible and commenced his sermon his tones gradually strengthened as he entered with vehemence into the arguments which he maintained. They related chiefly to the abstract points of the Christian faith, subjects grave, deep, and fathomless by mere human reason, but for which, with equal ingenuity and propriety, he sought a key in liberal quotations from the inspired writings. My mind was unprepared to coincide in all his reasoning, nor was I sure that in some instances I rightly comprehended his positions. But nothing could be more impressive than the eager enthusiastic manner of the good old man, and nothing more ingenious than his mode of reasoning. The Scotch, it is well known, are more remarkable for the exercise of their intellectual powers than for the keenness of their feelings ; they are, therefore, more moved by logic than by

rhetoric, and more attracted by acute and argumentative reasoning on doctrinal points than influenced by the enthusiastic appeals to the heart and to the passions, by which popular preachers in other countries win the favour of their hearers.

Among the attentive group which I now saw might be distinguished various expressions similar to those of the audience in the famous cartoon of Paul preaching at Athens. Here sat a zealous and intelligent Calvinist, with brows bent just as much as to indicate profound attention; lips slightly compressed; eyes fixed on the minister, with an expression of decent pride, as if sharing the triumph of his argument; the forefinger of the right hand touching successively those of the left, as the preacher, from argument to argument, ascended towards his conclusion. Another, with fiercer and sterner look, intimated at once his contempt of all who doubted the creed of his pastor, and his joy at the appropriate punishment denounced against them. A third, perhaps belonging to a different congregation, and present only by accident or curiosity, had the appearance of internally impeaching some link of the reasoning; and you might plainly read, in the slight motion of his head, his doubts as to the soundness of the preacher's argument. The greater part listened with a calm satisfied countenance, expressive of a conscious merit in being present, and in listening to such an ingenious discourse, although, perhaps, unable entirely to comprehend it. The women in general belonged to this last division of the audience; the old, however, seeming more grimly intent upon the abstract doctrines laid before them; while the younger females permitted their eyes occasionally to make a modest circuit around the congregation, and some of them, Tresham (if my vanity did not greatly deceive me), contrived to distinguish your friend and servant as a handsome young stranger and an Englishman. As to the rest of the congregation, the stupid gaped, yawned, or slept, till awakened by the application of their more zealous neighbours' heels to their shins; and the idle indicated their inattention by the wandering of their eyes, but dared give no more decided token of weariness. Amid the Lowland costume of coat and cloak, I could here and there discern a Highland plaid, the wearer of which, resting on his basket-hilt, sent his eyes among the audience with the unrestrained curiosity of savage wonder; and who in all probability was inattentive to the sermon for a very pardonable reason — because he did not understand the language in which it was delivered. The

martial and wild look, however, of these stragglers added a kind of character which the congregation could not have exhibited without them. They were more numerous, Andrew afterwards observed, owing to some cattle-fair in the neighbourhood.

Such was the group of countenances, rising tier on tier, discovered to my critical inspection by such sunbeams as forced their way through the narrow Gothic lattices of the Laigh Kirk of Glasgow, and, having illuminated the attentive congregation, lost themselves in the vacuity of the vaults behind, giving to the nearer part of their labyrinth a sort of imperfect twilight, and leaving their recesses in an utter darkness, which gave them the appearance of being interminable.

I have already said that I stood with others in the exterior circle, with my face to the preacher and my back to those vaults which I have so often mentioned. My position rendered me particularly obnoxious to any interruption which arose from any slight noise occurring amongst these retiring arches, where the least sound was multiplied by a thousand echoes. The occasional sound of raindrops, which, admitted through some cranny in the ruined roof, fell successively and plashed upon the pavement beneath, caused me to turn my head more than once to the place from whence it seemed to proceed; and when my eyes took that direction I found it difficult to withdraw them — such is the pleasure our imagination receives from the attempt to penetrate as far as possible into an intricate labyrinth imperfectly lighted, and exhibiting objects which irritate our curiosity only because they acquire a mysterious interest from being undefined and dubious. My eyes became habituated to the gloomy atmosphere to which I directed them, and insensibly my mind became more interested in their discoveries than in the metaphysical subtleties which the preacher was enforcing.

My father had often checked me for this wandering mood of mind, arising perhaps from an excitability of imagination to which he was a stranger; and the finding myself at present solicited by these temptations to inattention recalled the time when I used to walk, led by his hand, to Mr. Shower's chapel, and the earnest injunctions which he then laid on me to redeem the time, because the days were evil. At present the picture which my thoughts suggested, far from fixing my attention, destroyed the portion I had yet left, by conjuring up to my recollection the peril in which his affairs now stood. I endeavoured, in the lowest whisper I could frame, to request

Andrew to obtain information whether any of the gentlemen of the firm of MacVittie and Co. were at present in the congregation. But Andrew, wrapped in profound attention to the sermon, only replied to my suggestion by hard punches with his elbow, as signals to me to remain silent. I next strained my eyes, with equally bad success, to see if, among the sea of up-turned faces which bent their eyes on the pulpit as a common centre, I could discover the sober and business-like physiognomy of Owen. But not among the broad beavers of the Glasgow citizens, or the yet broader-brimmed Lowland bonnets of the peasants of Lanarkshire, could I see anything resembling the decent periwig, starched ruffles, or the uniform suit of light brown garments, appertaining to the head clerk of the establishment of Osbaldistone and Tresham. My anxiety now returned on me with such violence as to overpower not only the novelty of the scene around me, by which it had hitherto been diverted, but moreover my sense of decorum. I pulled Andrew hard by the sleeve, and intimated my wish to leave the church and pursue my investigation as I could. Andrew, obdurate in the Laigh Kirk of Glasgow as on the mountains of Cheviot, for some time deigned me no answer; and it was only when he found I could not otherwise be kept quiet that he condescended to inform me that, being once in the church, we could not leave it till service was over, because the doors were locked so soon as the prayers began. Having thus spoken in a brief and peevish whisper, Andrew again assumed the air of intelligent and critical importance and attention to the preacher's discourse.

While I endeavoured to make a virtue of necessity, and recall my attention to the sermon, I was again disturbed by a singular interruption. A voice from behind whispered distinctly in my ear, 'You are in danger in this city.' I turned round as if mechanically.

One or two starched and ordinary-looking mechanics stood beside and behind me, stragglers who, like ourselves, had been too late in obtaining entrance. But a glance at their faces satisfied me, though I could hardly say why, that none of these was the person who had spoken to me. Their countenances seemed all composed to attention to the sermon, and not one of them returned any glance of intelligence to the inquisitive and startled look with which I surveyed them. A massive round pillar, which was close behind us, might have concealed the speaker the instant he uttered his mysterious caution; but wherefore it was given in such a place, or to what species of

danger it directed my attention, or by whom the warning was uttered, were points on which my imagination lost itself in conjecture. It would, however, I concluded, be repeated, and I resolved to keep my countenance turned towards the clergyman, that the whisperer might be tempted to renew his communication under the idea that the first had passed unobserved.

My plan succeeded. I had not resumed the appearance of attention to the preacher for five minutes, when the same voice whispered, 'Listen; but do not look back.' I kept my face in the same direction. 'You are in danger in this place,' the voice proceeded; 'so am I. Meet me to-night on the Brigg, at twelve precisely; keep at home till the gloaming, and avoid observation.'

Here the voice ceased, and I instantly turned my head. But the speaker had, with still greater promptitude, glided behind the pillar and escaped my observation. I was determined to catch a sight of him, if possible, and, extricating myself from the outer circle of hearers, I also stepped behind the column. All there was empty; and I could only see a figure wrapped in a mantle, whether a Lowland cloak or Highland plaid I could not distinguish, which traversed like a phantom the dreary vacuity of vaults which I have described.

I made a mechanical attempt to pursue the mysterious form, which glided away and vanished in the vaulted cemetery like the spectre of one of the numerous dead who rested within its precincts. I had little chance of arresting the course of one obviously determined not to be spoken with; but that little chance was lost by my stumbling and falling before I had made three steps from the column. The obscurity which occasioned my misfortune covered my disgrace, which I accounted rather lucky, for the preacher, with that stern authority which the Scottish ministers assume for the purpose of keeping order in their congregations, interrupted his discourse to desire the 'proper officer' to take into custody the causer of this disturbance in the place of worship. As the noise, however, was not repeated, the beadle, or whatever else he was called, did not think it necessary to be rigorous in searching out the offender; so that I was enabled, without attracting farther observation, to place myself by Andrew's side in my original position. The service proceeded, and closed without the occurrence of anything else worthy of notice.

As the congregation departed and dispersed, my friend

Andrew exclaimed, 'See, yonder is worthy Mr. MacVittie and Mrs. MacVittie, and Miss Alison MacVittie, and Mr. Thomas MacFin, that they say is to marry Miss Alison, if a' bows row right; she'll hae a hantle siller, if she's no that bonny.'

My eyes took the direction he pointed out. Mr. MacVittie was a tall, thin, elderly man, with hard features, thick grey eyebrows, light eyes, and, as I imagined, a sinister expression of countenance, from which my heart recoiled. I remembered the warning I had received in the church, and hesitated to address this person, though I could not allege to myself any rational ground of dislike or suspicion.

I was yet in suspense when Andrew, who mistook my hesitation for bashfulness, proceeded to exhort me to lay it aside. 'Speak till him — speak till him, Mr. Francis; he's no provost yet, though they say he'll be my lord neist year. Speak till him, hen; he'll gie ye a decent answer for as rich as he is, unless ye were wanting siller frae him: they say he's dour to draw his purse.'

It immediately occurred to me that, if this merchant were really of the churlish and avaricious disposition which Andrew intimated, there might be some caution necessary in making myself known, as I could not tell how accounts might stand between my father and him. This consideration came in aid of the mysterious hint which I had received, and the dislike which I had conceived at the man's countenance. Instead of addressing myself directly to him, as I had designed to have done, I contented myself with desiring Andrew to inquire at Mr. MacVittie's house the address of Mr. Owen, an English gentleman; and I charged him not to mention the person from whom he received the commission, but to bring me the result to the small inn where we lodged. This Andrew promised to do. He said something of the duty of my attending the evening service; but added, with a causticity natural to him, that 'in troth, if folk couldna keep their legs still, but wad needs be coupling the creels ower throughstanes, as if they wad raise the very dead folk wi' the clatter, a kirk wi' a chimley in 't was fittest for them.'

CHAPTER XXI

On the Rialto, every night at twelve,
I take my evening's walk of meditation :
There we two will meet.

Venice Preserved.

FULL of sinister augury, for which, however, I could assign no satisfactory cause, I shut myself up in my apartment at the inn, and having dismissed Andrew, after resisting his importunity to accompany him to St. Enoch's Kirk,¹ where, he said, 'a soul-searching divine was to haud forth,' I set myself seriously to consider what were best to be done. I never was what is properly called superstitious ; but I suppose all men, in situations of peculiar doubt and difficulty, when they have exercised their reason to little purpose, are apt, in a sort of despair, to abandon the reins to their imagination, and be guided either altogether by chance or by those whimsical impressions which take possession of the mind, and to which we give way as if to involuntary impulses. There was something so singularly repulsive in the hard features of the Scotch trader, that I could not resolve to put myself into his hands without transgressing every caution which could be derived from the rules of physiognomy ; while at the same time the warning voice, the dream which flitted away like a vanishing shadow through those visions, which might be termed 'the valley of the shadow of death,' had something captivating for the imagination of a young man who, you will farther please to remember, was also a young poet.

If danger was around me, as the mysterious communication intimated, how could I learn its nature, or the means of averting it, but by meeting my unknown counsellor, to whom I could see no reason for imputing any other than kind intentions. Rashleigh and his machinations occurred more than once to my remembrance ; but so rapid had my journey been, that I could

¹ This I believe to be an anachronism, as Saint Enoch's Church was not built at the date of the story. — It was founded in 1780 (*Laing*).

not suppose him apprised of my arrival in Glasgow, much less prepared to play off any stratagem against my person. In my temper also I was bold and confident, strong and active in person, and in some measure accustomed to the use of arms, in which the French youth of all kinds were then initiated. I did not fear any single opponent; assassination was neither the vice of the age nor of the country; the place selected for our meeting was too public to admit any suspicion of meditated violence. In a word, I resolved to meet my mysterious counsellor on the bridge, as he had requested, and to be afterwards guided by circumstances. Let me not conceal from you, Fresham, what at the time I endeavoured to conceal from myself—the subdued, yet secretly-cherished hope that Diana Vernon might, by what chance I knew not, through what means I could not guess, have some connexion with this strange and dubious intimation, conveyed at a time and place, and in a manner, so surprising. She alone, whispered this insidious thought—she alone knew of my journey, from her own account she possessed friends and influence in Scotland, she had furnished me with a talisman, whose power I was to invoke when all other aid failed me; who then, but Diana Vernon, possessed either means, knowledge, or inclination for averting the dangers by which, as it seemed, my steps were surrounded? This flattering view of my very doubtful case pressed itself upon me again and again. It insinuated itself into my thoughts, though very bashfully, before the hour of dinner; it displayed its attractions more boldly during the course of my frugal meal, and became so courageously intrusive during the succeeding half hour (aided perhaps by the flavour of a few glasses of most excellent claret) that, with a sort of desperate attempt to escape from a delusive seduction, to which I felt the danger of yielding, I pushed my glass from me, threw aside my dinner, seized my hat, and rushed into the open air with the feeling of one who would fly from his own thoughts. Yet perhaps I yielded to the very feelings from which I seemed to fly, since my steps insensibly led me to the bridge over the Clyde, the place assigned for the rendezvous by my mysterious monitor.

Although I had not partaken of my repast until the hours of evening church-service were over—in which, by the way, I complied with the religious scruples of my landlady, who hesitated to dress a hot dinner between sermons, and also with the admonition of my unknown friend, to keep my apartment till twilight—several hours had still to pass away betwixt the

time of my appointment and that at which I reached the assigned place of meeting. The interval, as you will readily credit, was wearisome enough; and I can hardly explain to you how it passed away. Various groups of persons, all of whom, young and old, seemed impressed with a reverential feeling of the sanctity of the day, passed along the large open meadow which lies on the northern bank of the Clyde, and serves at once as a bleaching-field and pleasure-walk for the inhabitants, or paced with slow steps the long bridge which communicates with the southern district of the county. All that I remember of them was the general, but not displeasing, intimation of a devotional character impressed on each little party, formally assumed perhaps by some, but sincerely characterising the greater number, which lulled the petulant gaiety of the young into a tone of more quietude, and promoted a resting, interchange of sentiments, and suppressed the vehement argument and protracted disputes of those of more advanced age. Notwithstanding the numbers who passed, no general sound of the human voice was heard; for turned again to take some minutes' voluntary exercise, to which the leisure of the evening, and the beauty of the surrounding scenery, seemed to invite them: all hurried to their homes and resting-places. To one accustomed to the mode of spending Sunday evenings abroad, even among the French Calvinists, there seemed something Judaical, yet at the same time striking and affecting, in this mode of keeping the Sabbath holy. Insensibly, I felt my mode of sauntering by the side of the river, and crossing successively the various persons who were passing homeward, and without tarrying or delay, must expose me to observation at least, if not to censure, and I slunk out of the frequented path, and found a trivial occupation for my mind in marshalling my revolving walk in such a manner as should least render me obnoxious to observation. The different alleys lined out through this extensive meadow, and which are planted with trees, like the Park of St. James's in London, gave me facilities for carrying into effect these childish manœuvres.

As I walked down one of these avenues, I heard, to my surprise, the sharp and conceited voice of Andrew Fairservice, raised by a sense of self-consequence to a pitch somewhat higher than others seemed to think consistent with the solemnity of the day. To slip behind the row of trees under which I walked was perhaps no very dignified proceeding; but it was the easiest mode of escaping his observation, and perhaps his im-

pertinent assiduity and still more intrusive curiosity. As he passed, I heard him communicate to a grave-looking man in a black coat, a slouched hat, and Geneva cloak the following sketch of a character which my self-love, while revolting against it as a caricature, could not, nevertheless, refuse to recognize as a likeness:—

'Ay, ay, Mr. Hammorgaw, it's e'en as I tell ye. He's no a'thegither sae void o' sense neither: he has a gloaming night o' what's reasonable—that is anes and awa', a glisk and nae mair; but he's crack-brained and cockle-headed about his nipperty-tipperty poetry nonsense. He'll glowr at an auld-world barkit aik-snag as if it were a queez-maddam in full bearing; and a naked craig, wi' a burn jawing ower't, is unto him as a garden garnisht with flowering knots and choice pot-herbs; then he wad rather claver wi' a daft quean they ca' Diana Vernon—weel I wot they might ca' her Diana of the Ephesians, for she's little better than a heathen; better? she's waur—a Roman, a mere Roman—he'll claver wi' her, or any other idle slut, rather than hear what might do him gude a' the days of his life frae you or me, Mr. Hammorgaw, or any ither sober and sponisible person. Reason, sir, is what he canna endure; he's a' for your vanities and volubilities; and he ance tell'd me, puir blinded creature! that the Psalms of David were excellent poetry! as if the holy Psalmist thought o' rattling rhymes in a blether, like his ain silly clinkum-clankum things that he ca's verse. Gude help him! twa lines o' Davie Lindsay wad ding a' he ever clerkit.'

While listening to this perverted account of my temper and studies, you will not be surprised if I meditated for Mr. Fair-service the unpleasant surprise of a broken pate on the first decent opportunity. His friend only intimated his attention by 'Ay, ay!' and 'Is't e'en sae?' and such like expressions of interest, at the proper breaks in Mr. Fair-service's harangue, until at length, in answer to some observation of greater length, the import of which I only collected from my trusty gude's reply, honest Andrew answered, 'Tell him a bit o' my mind, quoath ye? Wha wad be fule then but Andrew? He's a red-wud deevil, man! He's like Giles Heathertap's auld bear: ye need but shake a clout at him to make him turn and gore. Bide wi' him, say ye? Troth, I kenna what for I bide wi' him mysell. But the lad's no a bad lad after a'; and he needs some carefu' body to look after him. He hasna the right grip o' his hand: the gowd slips through't like water, man; and it's no

that ill a thing to be near him when his purse is in his hand, and it's seldom out o't. And then he's come o' guid kith and kin. My heart warms to the pair thoughtless callant, Mr. Hammorgaw; and then the penny fee——

In the latter part of this instructive communication Mr. Fairservice lowered his voice to a tone better beseeeming the conversation in a place of public resort on a Sabbath evening, and his companion and he were soon beyond my hearing. My feelings of hasty resentment soon subsided under the conviction that, as Andrew himself might have said, 'A hearkener always hears a bad tale of himself,' and that whoever should happen to overhear their character discussed in their own servants'-hall must prepare to undergo the scalpel of some such anatomist as Mr. Fairservice. The incident was so far useful as, including the feelings to which it gave rise, it sped away a part of the time which hung so heavily on my hand.

Evening had now closed, and the growing darkness gave to the broad, still, and deep expanse of the brimful river first a hue sombre and uniform, then a dismal and turbid appearance, partially lighted by a waning and pallid moon. The massive and ancient bridge which stretches across the Clyde was now but dimly visible, and resembled that which Mirza, in his unequalled vision, has described as traversing the valley of Bagdad. The low-browed arches, seen as imperfectly as the dusky current which they bestrode, seemed rather caverns which swallowed up the gloomy waters of the river than apertures contrived for their passage. With the advancing night the stillness of the scene increased. There was yet a twinkling light occasionally seen to glide along by the stream, which conducted home one or two of the small parties who, after the abstinence and religious duties of the day, had partaken of a social supper, the only meal at which the rigid Presbyterians made some advance to sociality on the Sabbath. Occasionally, also, the hoofs of a horse were heard, whose rider, after spending the Sunday in Glasgow, was directing his steps towards his residence in the country. These sounds and sights became gradually of more rare occurrence. At length they altogether ceased, and I was left to enjoy my solitary walk on the shores of the Clyde in solemn silence, broken only by the tolling of the successive hours from the steeples of the churches.

But as the night advanced my impatience at the uncertainty of the situation in which I was placed increased every

moment, and became nearly ungovernable. I began to question whether I had been imposed upon by the trick of a fool, the raving of a madman, or the studied machination of a villain, and paced the little quay or pier adjoining the entrance to the bridge in a state of incredible anxiety and vexation. At length the hour of twelve o'clock swung its summons over the city from the belfry of the metropolitan church of St. Mungo, and was answered and vouched by all the others like dutiful diocesans. The echoes had scarcely ceased to repeat the last sound when a human form — the first I had seen for two hours — appeared passing along the bridge from the southern shore of the river. I advanced to meet him with a feeling as if my fate depended on the result of the interview, so much had my anxiety been wound up by protracted expectation. All that I could remark of the passenger as we advanced towards each other was that his frame was rather beneath than above the middle size, but apparently strong, thick-set, and muscular; his dress a horseman's wrapping coat. I slackened my pace, and almost paused as I advanced, in expectation that he would address me. But, to my inexpressible disappointment, he passed without speaking, and I had no pretence for being the first to address one who, notwithstanding his appearance at the very hour of appointment, might nevertheless be an absolute stranger. I stopped when he had passed me and looked after him, uncertain whether I ought not to follow him. The stranger walked on till near the northern end of the bridge, then paused, looked back, and, turning round, again advanced towards me. I resolved that this time he should not have the apology for silence proper to apparitions, who, it is vulgarly supposed, cannot speak until they are spoken to. 'You walk late, sir,' said I, as we met a second time.

'I bide tryste,' was the reply, 'and so I think do you, Mr. Osbaldistone.'

'You are then the person who requested to meet me here at this unusual hour?'

'I am,' he replied. 'Follow me, and you shall know my reasons.'

'Before following you, I must know your name and purpose,' I answered.

'I am a man,' was the reply; 'and my purpose is friendly to you.'

'A mar?' I repeated. 'That is a very brief description.'

'It will serve for one who has no other to give,' said the

stranger. 'He that is without name, without friends, without coin, without country, is still at least a man; and he that has all these is no more.'

'Yet this is still too general an account of yourself, to say the least of it, to establish your credit with a stranger.'

'It is all I mean to give, howsoe'er; you may choose to follow me, or to remain without the information I desire to afford you.'

'Can you not give me that information here?' I demanded.

'You must receive it from your eyes, not from my tongue; you must follow me, or remain in ignorance of the information which I have to give you.'

There was something short, determined, and even stern in the man's manner, not certainly well calculated to conciliate undoubting confidence.

'What is it you fear?' he said, impatiently. 'To whom, think ye, your life is of such consequence that they should seek to bereave ye of it?'

'I fear nothing,' I replied firmly, though somewhat hastily. 'Walk on; I attend you.'

We proceeded, contrary to my expectation, to re-enter the town, and glided like mute spectres, side by side, up its empty and silent streets. The high and gloomy stone fronts, with the variegated ornaments and pediments of the windows, looked yet taller and more sable by the imperfect moonshine. Our walk was for some minutes in perfect silence. At length my conductor spoke.

'Are you afraid?'

'I retort your own words,' I replied; 'wherefore should I fear?'

'Because you are with a stranger, perhaps an enemy, in a place where you have no friends and many enemies.'

'I neither fear you nor them; I am young, active, and armed.'

'I am not armed,' replied my conductor; 'but no matter, a willing hand never lacked weapon. You say you fear nothing; but if you knew who was by your side perhaps you might underlie a tremor.'

'And why should I?' replied I. 'I again repeat, I fear nought that you can do.'

'Nought that I can do? Be it so. But do you not fear the consequences of being found with one whose very name whispered in this lonely street would make the stones themselves rise up to apprehend him, on whose head half the men in

Glasgow would build their fortune as on a found treasure, had they the luck to grip him by the collar, the sound of whose apprehension were as welcome at the Cross of Edinburgh as ever the news of a field stricken and won in Flanders ?'

'And who then are you, whose name should create so deep a feeling of terror ?' I replied.

'No enemy of yours, since I am conveying you to a place where, were I myself recognised and identified, iron to the heels and hemp to the craig would be my brief dooming.'

I paused and stood still on the pavement, drawing back so as to have the most perfect view of my companion which the light afforded, and which was sufficient to guard me against any sudden motion of assault.

'You have said,' I answered, 'either too much or too little — too much to induce me to confide in you as a mere stranger, since you avow yourself a person amenable to the laws of the country in which we are ; and too little, unless you could show that you are unjustly subjected to their rigour.'

As I ceased to speak, he made a step towards me. I drew back instinctively and laid my hand on the hilt of my sword.

'What,' said he, 'on an unarmed man, and your friend ?'

'I am yet ignorant if you are either the one or the other,' I replied ; 'and, to say the truth, your language and manner might well entitle me to doubt both.'

'It is manfully spoken,' replied my conductor ; 'and I respect him whose hand can keep his head. I will be frank and free with you : I am conveying you to prison.'

'To prison !' I exclaimed ; 'by what warrant, or for what offence ? You shall have my life sooner than my liberty ; I defy you, and I will not follow you a step farther.'

'I do not,' he said, 'carry you there as a prisoner. I am,' he added, drawing himself haughtily up, 'neither a messenger nor sheriff's officer ; I carry you to see a prisoner from whose lips you will learn the risk in which you presently stand. *Your* liberty is little risked by the visit ; mine is in some peril ; but that I readily encounter on your account, for I care not for risk, and I love a free young blood, that kens no protector but the cross o' the sword.'

While he spoke thus, we had reached the principal street, and were pausing before a large building of hewn stone, garnished, as I thought I could perceive, with gratings of iron before the windows.

'Muckle,' said the stranger, whose language became more

broadly national as he assumed a tone of colloquial freedom — 'muckle wad the provost and bailies o' Glasgow gie to hae him sitting with iron garters to his hose within their tolbooth that now stands wi' his legs as free as the red-deer's on the outside on 't. And little wad it avail them; for an if they had me there wi' a stane's weight o' iron at every ancle, I would show them a toom room and a lost lodger before to-morrow. But come on, what stint ye for?'

As he spoke thus, he tapped at a low wicket, and was answered by a sharp voice, as of one awakened from a dream or reverie — 'Fa's tat? Wha's that, I wad say? and fat a deil want ye at this hour at e'en? Clean again rules — clean again rules, as they ca' them.'

The protracted tone in which the last words were uttered betokened that the speaker was again composing himself to slumber. But my guide spoke in a loud whisper, 'Dougal, man! hae ye forgotten Ha nun Gregarach?'

'Deil a bit, deil a bit,' was the ready and lively response, and I heard the internal guardian of the prison-gate bustle up with great alacrity. A few words were exchanged between my conductor and the turnkey in a language to which I was an absolute stranger. The bolts revolved, but with a caution which marked the apprehension that the noise might be overheard, and we stood within the vestibule of the prison of Glasgow, a small but strong guard-room, from which a narrow staircase led upwards, and one or two low entrances conducted to apartments on the same level with the outward gate, all secured with the jealous strength of wickets, bolts, and bars. The walls, otherwise naked, were not unsuitably garnished with iron fetters and other uncouth implements, which might be designed for purposes still more inhuman, interspersed with partizans, guns, pistols of antique manufacture, and other weapons of defence and offence.

At finding myself so unexpectedly, fortuitously, and, as it were, by stealth, introduced within one of the legal fortresses of Scotland, I could not help recollecting my adventure in Northumberland, and fretting at the strange incidents which again, without any demerits of my own, threatened to place me in a dangerous and disagreeable collision with the laws of a country which I visited only in the capacity of a stranger.

CHAPTER XXII

Look round thee, young Astolpho. Here 's the place
Which men (for being poor) are sent to starve in ;
Rude remedy, I trow, for sore disease.
Within these walls, stifled by damp and stench,
Doth Hope's fair torch expire ; and at the snuff,
Ere yet 't is quite extinct, rude, wild, and wayward,
The desperate revelries of wild despair,
Kindling their hell-born cressets, light to deeds
That the poor captive would have died ere practised,
Till bondage sunk his soul to his condition.

The Prison, Act i. Scene 3.

AT my first entrance I turned an eager glance towards my conductor ; but the lamp in the vestibule was too low in flame to give my curiosity any satisfaction by affording a distinct perusal of his features. As the turnkey held the light in his hand, the beams fell more full on his own scarce less interesting figure. He was a wild shock-headed-looking animal, whose profusion of red hair covered and obscured his features, which were otherwise only characterised by the extravagant joy that affected him at the sight of my guide. In my experience I have met nothing so absolutely resembling my idea of a very uncouth, wild, and ugly savage adoring the idol of his tribe. He grinned, he shivered, he laughed, he was near crying, if he did not actually cry. He had a 'Where shall I go? What can I do for you?' expression of face, the complete, surrendered, and anxious subservience and devotion of which it is difficult to describe otherwise than by the awkward combination which I have attempted. The fellow's voice seemed choking in his ecstasy, and only could express itself in such interjections as 'Oigh, oigh — ay, ay ; it's lang since she's seen ye!' and other exclamations equally brief, expressed in the same unknown tongue in which he had communicated with my conductor while we were on the outside of the jail door. My guide received all this excess of joyful

gratulation much like a prince too early accustomed to the homage of those around him to be much moved by it, yet willing to requite it by the usual forms of royal courtesy. He extended his hand graciously towards the turnkey, with a civil inquiry of 'How's a' wi' you, Dougal?'

'Oigh, oigh!' exclaimed Dougal, softening the sharp exclamations of his surprise as he looked around with an eye of watchful alarm — 'oigh, to see you here — to see you here. Oigh, what will come o' ye gin the bailies suld come to get witting — ta filthy, gutty hallions, tat they are?'

My guide placed his finger on his lip and said, 'Fear nothing, Dougal; your hands shall never draw a bolt on me.'

'Tat sall they no,' said Dougal; 'she suld — she wad — that is, she wishes them hacked aff by the elbows first. But when are ye gaun yonder again? and ye'll no forget to let her ken? She's your puir cousin, God kens, only seven times removed.'

'I will let you ken, Dougal, as soon as my plans are settled.'

'And, by her sooth, when you do, an it were twal o' the Sunday at e'en, she'll fling her keys at the provost's head or she gie them anither turn, and that or ever Monday morning begins; see if she winna.'

My mysterious stranger cut his acquaintance's ecstasies short by again addressing him, in what I afterwards understood to be the Irish, Earse, or Gaelic, explaining, probably, the services which he required at his hand. The answer, 'Wi' a' her heart — wi' a' her soul,' with a good deal of indistinct muttering in a similar tone, intimated the turnkey's acquiescence in what he proposed. The fellow trimmed his dying lamp and made a sign to me to follow him.

'Do you not go with us?' said I, looking to my conductor.

'It is unnecessary,' he replied; 'my company may be inconvenient for you, and I had better remain to secure our retreat.'

'I do not suppose you mean to betray me to danger?' said I.

'To none but what I partake in doubly,' answered the stranger, with a voice of assurance which it was impossible to mistrust.

I followed the turnkey, who, leaving the inner wicket unlocked behind him, led me up a 'turnpike' (so the Scotch call a winding stair), then along a narrow gallery, then, opening one of several doors which led into the passage, he ushered me into a small apartment, and, casting his eye on the pallet bed

which occupied one corner, said with an under voice, as he placed the lamp on a little deal table, 'She's sleeping.'

'She! who? can it be Diana Vernon in this abode of misery!'

I turned my eye to the bed, and it was with a mixture of disappointment oddly mingled with pleasure that I saw my first suspicion had deceived me. I saw a head neither young nor beautiful, garnished with a grey beard of two days' growth, and accommodated with a red nightcap. The first glance put me at ease on the score of Diana Vernon; the second, as the slumberer awoke from a heavy sleep, yawned, and rubbed his eyes, presented me with features very different indeed—even those of my poor friend Owen. I drew back out of view an instant, that he might have time to recover himself; fortunately recollecting that I was but an intruder on these cells of sorrow, and that any alarm might be attended with unhappy consequences.

Meantime the unfortunate formalist, raising himself from the pallet bed with the assistance of one hand, and scratching his cap with the other, exclaimed, in a voice in which as much peevishness as he was capable of feeling contended with drowsiness, 'I'll tell you what, Mr. Dugwell, or whatever your name may be, the sum total of the matter is, that if my natural rest is to be broken in this manner, I must complain to the lord mayor.'

'Shentlemans to speak wi' her,' replied Dougal, resuming the true dogged sullen tone of a turnkey in exchange for the shrill clang of Highland congratulation with which he had welcomed my mysterious guide; and, turning on his heel, he left the apartment.

It was some time before I could prevail upon the unfortunate sleeper awakening to recognise me; and when he did so the distress of the worthy creature was extreme at supposing, which he naturally did, that I had been sent thither as a partner of his captivity.

'O, Mr. Frank, what have you brought yourself and the house to? I think nothing of myself, that am a mere cipher, so to speak; but you, that was your father's sum total—his *omnium*—you that might have been the first man in the first house in the first city, to be shut up in a nasty Scotch jail, where one cannot even get the dirt brushed off their clothes!'

He rubbed, with an air of peevish irritation, the once stainless brown coat, which had now shared some of the impurities

of the floor of his prison-house, his habits of extreme punctilious neatness acting mechanically to increase his distress.

'O Heaven be gracious to us!' he continued. 'What news this will be on 'Change! There has not the like come there since the battle of Almanza, where the total of the British loss was summed up to five thousand men killed and wounded, besides a floating balance of missing; but what will that be to the news that Osbaldistone and Tresham have stopped!'

I broke in on his lamentations to acquaint him that I was no prisoner, though scarce able to account for my being in that place at such an hour. I could only silence his inquiries by persisting in those which his own situation suggested; and at length obtained from him such information as he was able to give me. It was none of the most distinct; for, however clear-headed in his own routine of commercial business, Owen, you are well aware, was not very acute in comprehending what lay beyond that sphere.

The sum of his information was, that of two correspondents of my father's firm at Glasgow, where, owing to engagements in Scotland formerly alluded to, he transacted a great deal of business, both my father and Owen had found the house of MacVittie, MacFin, and Company the most obliging and accommodating. They had deferred to the great English house on every possible occasion; and in their bargains and transactions acted, without repining, the part of the jackall, who only claims what the lion is pleased to leave him. However small the share of profit allotted to them, it was always, as they expressed it, 'enough for the like of them'; however large the portion of trouble, 'they were sensible they could not do too much to deserve the continued patronage and good opinion of their honoured friends in Crane Alley.'

The dictates of my father were to MacVittie and MacFin the laws of the Medes and Persians, not to be altered, innovated, or even discussed; and the punctilios exacted by Owen in their business transactions — for he was a great lover of form, more especially when he could dictate it *ex cathedra* — seemed scarce less sanctimonious in their eyes. This tone of deep and respectful observance went all currently down with Owen; but my father looked a little closer into men's bosoms, and whether suspicious of this excess of deference, or, as a lover of brevity and simplicity in business, tired with these gentlemen's long-winded professions of regard, he had uniformly resisted their desire to become his sole agents in Scotland. On

the contrary, he transacted many affairs through a correspondent of a character perfectly different — a man whose good opinion of himself amounted to self-conceit, and who, disliking the English in general as much as my father did the Scotch, would hold no communication but on a footing of absolute equality; jealous, moreover, captious occasionally, as tenacious of his own opinions in point of form as Owen could be of his, and totally indifferent though the authority of all Lombard Street had stood against his own private opinion.

As these peculiarities of temper rendered it difficult to transact business with Mr. Nicol Jarvie; as they occasioned at times disputes and coldness between the English house and their correspondent, which were only got over by a sense of mutual interest; as, moreover, Owen's personal vanity sometimes suffered a little in the discussions to which they gave rise, you cannot be surprised, Tresham, that our old friend threw at all times the weight of his influence in favour of the civil, discreet, accommodating concern of MacVittie and MacFin, and spoke of Jarvie as a petulant, conceited Scotch pedlar, with whom there was no dealing.

It was also not surprising that in these circumstances, which I only learned in detail some time afterwards, Owen, in the difficulties to which the house was reduced by the absence of my father and the disappearance of Rashleigh, should, on his arrival in Scotland, which took place two days before mine, have recourse to the friendship of those correspondents who had always professed themselves obliged, gratified, and devoted to the service of his principal. He was received at Messrs. MacVittie and MacFin's counting-house in the Gallowgate with something like the devotion a Catholic would pay to his tutelar saint. But, alas! this sunshine was soon overclouded, when, encouraged by the fair hopes which it inspired, he opened the difficulties of the house to his friendly correspondents, and requested their counsel and assistance. MacVittie was almost stunned by the communication; and MacFin, ere it was completed, was already at the ledger of their firm, and deeply engaged in the very bowels of the multitudinous accounts between their house and that of Osbaldistone and Tresham, for the purpose of discovering on which side the balance lay. Alas! the scale depressed considerably against the English firm; and the faces of MacVittie and MacFin, hitherto only blank and doubtful, became now ominous, grim, and lowering. They met Mr. Owen's request of countenance and assistance

with a counter-demand of instant security against imminent hazard of eventual loss ; and at length, speaking more plainly, required that a deposit of assets, destined for other purposes, should be placed in their hands for that purpose. Owen repelled this demand with great indignation as dishonourable to his constituents, unjust to the other creditors of Osbaldistone and Tresham, and very ungrateful on the part of those by whom it was made.

The Scotch partners gained in the course of this controversy, what is very convenient to persons who are in the wrong, an opportunity and pretext for putting themselves in a violent passion, and for taking, under the pretext of the provocation they had received, measures to which some sense of decency, if not of conscience, might otherwise have deterred them from resorting.

Owen had a small share, as I believe is usual, in the house to which he acted as head clerk, and was therefore personally liable for all its obligations. This was known to Messrs. MacVittie and MacFin ; and, with a view of making him feel their power, or rather in order to force him at this emergency into those measures in their favour to which he had expressed himself so repugnant, they had recourse to a summary process of arrest and imprisonment, which it seems the law of Scotland (therein surely liable to much abuse) allows to a creditor who finds his conscience at liberty to make oath that the debtor meditates departing from the realm. Under such a warrant had poor Owen been confined to durance on the day preceding that when I was so strangely guided to his prison-house.

Thus possessed of the alarming outline of facts, the question remained, what was to be done ? and it was not of easy determination. I plainly perceived the perils with which we were surrounded, but it was more difficult to suggest any remedy. The warning which I had already received seemed to intimate that my own personal liberty might be endangered by an open appearance in Owen's behalf. Owen entertained the same apprehension, and, in the exaggeration of his terror, assured me that a Scotchman, rather than run the risk of losing a farthing by an Englishman, would find law for arresting his wife, children, man-servant, maid-servant, and stranger within his household. The laws concerning debt in most countries are so unmercifully severe that I could not altogether disbelieve his statement ; and my arrest, in the present circumstances, would have been a *coup de grâce* to my father's affairs. In this

dilemma I asked Owen if he had not thought of having recourse to my father's other correspondent in Glasgow, Mr. Nicol Jarvie.

'He had sent him a letter,' he replied, 'that morning; but if the smooth-tongued and civil house in the Gallowgate had used him thus, what was to be expected from the cross-grained crab-stock in the Salt Market? You might as well ask a broker to give up his per centage as expect a favour from him without the *per contra*. He had not even,' Owen said, 'answered his letter, though it was put into his hand that morning as he went to church.' And here the despairing man of figures threw himself down on his pallet, exclaiming — 'My poor dear master! My poor dear master! O, Mr. Frank, Mr. Frank, this is all your obstinacy! But God forgive me for saying so to you in your distress! It's God's disposing, and man must submit.'

My philosophy, Tresham, could not prevent my sharing in the honest creature's distress, and we mingled our tears, the more bitter on my part as the perverse opposition to my father's will, with which the kind-hearted Owen forbore to upbraid me, rose up to my conscience as the cause of all this affliction.

In the midst of our mingled sorrow we were disturbed and surprised by a loud knocking at the outward door of the prison. I ran to the top of the staircase to listen, but could only hear the voice of the turnkey, alternately in a high tone, answering to some person without, and in a whisper, addressed to the person who had guided me hither: 'She's coming — she's coming,' aloud; then in a low key, 'O hon-a-ri! O hon-a-ri! what'll she do now? Gang up ta stair and hide yoursell ahint ta Sassenach shentleman's ped. She's coming as fast as she can. Ahellanay! it's my lord provosts, and ta pailies, and ta guard, and ta captain's coming toon stairs too. Got pless her! gang up or he meets her. She's coming — she's coming; ta lock's sair roosted.'

While Dougal unwillingly, and with as much delay as possible, undid the various fastenings to give admittance to those without, whose impatience became clamorous, my guide ascended the winding stair and sprang into Owen's apartment, into which I followed him. He cast his eyes hastily round as if looking for a place of concealment, then said to me, 'Lend me your pistols; yet it's no matter, I can do without them. Whatever you see, take no heed, and do not mix your hand in another man's feud. This gear's mine, and I must manage it

as I dow; but I have been as hard bested, and worse, than I am even now.'

As the stranger spoke these words he stripped from his person the cumbrous upper coat in which he was wrapt, confronted the door of the apartment, on which he fixed a keen and determined glance, drawing his person a little back to concentrate his force, like a fine horse brought up to the leaping-bar. I had not a moment's doubt that he meant to extricate himself from his embarrassment, whatever might be the cause of it, by springing full upon those who should appear when the doors opened, and forcing his way through all opposition into the street; and such was the appearance of strength and agility displayed in his frame, and of determination in his look and manner, that I did not doubt a moment but that he might get clear through his opponents, unless they employed fatal means to stop his purpose.

It was a period of awful suspense betwixt the opening of the outward gate and that of the door of the apartment, when there appeared — no guard with bayonets fixed, or watch with clubs, bills, or partizans, but a good-looking young woman, with program petticoats, tucked up for trudging through the streets, and holding a lantern in her hand. This female ushered in a more important personage, in form stout, short, and somewhat corpulent; and by dignity, as it soon appeared, a magistrate, bob-wigged, bustling, and breathless with peevish impatience. My conductor, at his appearance, drew back as if to escape observation; but he could not elude the penetrating twinkle with which this dignitary reconnoitered the whole apartment.

'A bonny thing it is, and a beseeming, that I should be kept at the door half an hour, Captain Stanchells,' said he, addressing the principal jailor, who now showed himself at the door as if in attendance on the great man, 'knocking as hard to get into the tolbooth as ony body else wad to get out of it, could that avail them, poor fallen creatures! And how's this? how's this? strangers in the jail after lock-up hours, and on the Sabbath evening! I shall look after this, Stanchells, you may depend on't. Keep the door locked, and I'll speak to these gentlemen in a gliffing. But first I maun hae a crack wi' an auld acquaintance here. Mr. Owen, Mr. Owen, how's a' wi' ye, man?'

'Pretty well in body, I thank you, Mr. Jarvie,' drawled out poor Owen, 'but sore afflicted in spirit.'

'Nae doubt, nae doubt. Ay, ay, it's an awfu' whummle;

and for ane that held his head sae high too — human nature, human nature! Ay, ay, we're a' subject to a downcome. Mr. Osbaldistone is a gude honest gentleman; but I aye said he was aye o' them wad make a spune or spoil a horn, as my father the worthy deacon used to say. The deacon used to say to me, "Nick — young Nick" — his name was Nicol as weel as mine, sae folks ca'd us in their dafin' young Nick and auld Nick — "Nick," said he, "never put out your arm farther than ye can draw it easily back again." I hae said sae to Mr. Osbaldistone, and he didna seem to take it a'thegether sae kind as I wished; but it was weel meant — weel meant.'

This discourse, delivered with prodigious volubility and a great appearance of self-complacency, as he recollected his own advice and predictions, gave little promise of assistance at the hands of Mr. Jarvie. Yet it soon appeared rather to proceed from a total want of delicacy than any deficiency of real kindness; for when Owen expressed himself somewhat hurt that these things should be recalled to memory in his present situation, the Glaswegian took him by the hand and bade him 'Cheer up a gliff! D'ye think I wad hae comed out at twal o'clock at night, and amais broken the Lord's day, just to tell a fa'en man o' his backslidings? Na, na, that's no Bailie Jarvie's gate, nor was't his worthy father's the deacon afore him. Why, man! it's my rule never to think on worldly business on the Sabbath, and though I did a' I could to keep your note that I gat this morning out o' my head, yet I thought mair on it a' day than on the preaching. And it's my rule to gang to my bed wi' the yellow curtains preecesely at ten o'clock, unless I were eating a haddock wi' a neighbour, or a neighbour wi' me — ask the lass-quean there if it isna a fundamental rule in my household — and here hae I sitten up reading gude books, and gaping as if I wad swallow St. Enoch Kirk, till it chappit twal, whilk was a lawfu' hour to gie a look at my ledger just to see how things stood between us; and then, as time and tide wait for no man, I made the lass get the lantern, and came slipping my ways here to see what can be dune anent your affairs. Bailie Jarvie can command entrance into the tolbooth at any hour, day or night; sae could my father the deacon in his time, honest man, praise to his memory!'

Although Owen groaned at the mention of the ledger, leading me grievously to fear that here also the balance stood in the wrong column; and although the worthy magistrate's speech expressed much self-complacency and some ominous triumph in

his own superior judgment, yet it was blended with a sort of frank and blunt good-nature, from which I could not help deriving some hopes. He requested to see some papers he mentioned, snatched them hastily from Owen's hand, and, sitting on the bed, to 'rest his shanks,' as he was pleased to express the accommodation which that posture afforded him, his servant-girl held up the lantern to him, while, pshawing, muttering, and sputtering, now at the imperfect light, now at the contents of the packet, he ran over the writings it contained.

Seeing him fairly engaged in this course of study, the guide who had brought me hither seemed disposed to take an unceremonious leave. He made a sign to me to say nothing, and intimidated by his change of posture an intention to glide towards the door in such a manner as to attract the least possible observation. But the alert magistrate (very different from my old acquaintance, Mr. Justice Inglewood) instantly detected and interrupted his purposes. 'I say, look to the door, Stanchells; shut and lock it, and keep watch on the outside.'

The stranger's brow darkened, and he seemed for an instant again to meditate the effecting his retreat by violence; but ere he had determined the door closed and the ponderous bolt revolved. He muttered an exclamation in Gaelic, strode across the floor, and then, with an air of dogged resolution, as if fixed and prepared to see the scene to an end, sate himself down on the oak table and whistled a strathspey.

Mr. Jarvie, who seemed very alert and expeditious in going through business, soon showed himself master of that which he had been considering, and addressed himself to Mr. Owen in the following strain: 'Weel, Mr. Owen, weel, your house are awin certain sums to Messrs. MacVittie and MacFin — shame fa' their souple snouts! they made that and mair out o' a bargain about the aik-wood at Glen Cailziechat, that they took out atween my teeth, wi' help o' your gude word, I maun needs say, Mr. Owen; but that makes nae odds now. Weel, sir, your house awes them this siller; and for this, and relief of other engagements they stand in for you, they hae putten a double turn o' Stanchells's muckle key on ye. Weel, sir, ye awe this siller, and maybe ye awe some mair to some other body too, maybe ye awe some to mysell, Bailie Nicol Jarvie.'

'I cannot deny, sir, but the balance may of this date be brought out against us, Mr. Jarvie,' said Owen; 'but you'll please to consider —'

'I hae nae time to consider e'enow, Mr. Owen; sae near

Sabbath at e'en, and out o' ane's warm bed at this time o' night, and a sort o' drow in the air besides, there's nae time for considering. But, sir, as I was saying, ye awe me money — it winna deny — ye awe me money, less or mair, I'll stand by it. But then, Mr. Owen, I canna see how you, an active man that understands business, can redd out the business ye're come down about, and clear us a' aff — as I have gritt hope ye will — if ye're keepit lying here in the tolbooth of Glasgow. Now, sir, if you can find caution *judicio sisti*, that is, that ye winna flee the country, but appear and relieve your caution when ca'd for in our legal courts, ye may be set at liberty this very morning.'

'Mr. Jarvie,' said Owen, 'if any friend would become surety for me to that effect, my liberty might be usefully employed, doubtless, both for the house and all connected with it.'

'Aweel, sir,' continued Jarvie, 'and doubtless such a friend wad expect ye to appear when ca'd on, and relieve him o' his engagement.'

'And I should do so as certainly, bating sickness or death, as that two and two make four.'

'Aweel, Mr. Owen,' resumed the citizen of Glasgow, 'I dinna misdoubt ye, and I'll prove it, sir — I'll prove it. I am a careful man, as is weel kend, and industrious, as the hale town can testify; and I can win my crowns, and keep my crowns, and count my crowns wi' ony body in the Saut Market, or it may be in the Gallowgate; and I'm a prudent man, as my father the deacon was before me; but rather than an honest civil gentleman, that understands business, and is willing to do justice to all men, should lie by the heels this gate, unable to help himsell or ony body else — why, conscience, man! I'll be your bail mysell. But ye'll mind it's a bail *judicio sisti*, as our town-clerk says, not *judicatum solci*; ye'll mind that, for there's muckle difference.'

Mr. Owen assured him that, as matters then stood, he could not expect any one to become security for the actual payment of the debt, but that there was not the most distant cause for apprehending loss from his failing to present himself when lawfully called upon.

'I believe ye — I believe ye. Eneugh said — eneugh said. We'se hae your legs loose by breakfast-time. And now let's hear what thir chamber chieft o' yours hae to say for themselves, or how, in the name of unrulie, they got here at this time o' night.'

CHAPTER XXIII

Hame came our gudeman at e'en,
And hame came he,
And there he saw a man
Where a man suldna be.
'How's this now, kimmer?
How's this? quo' he, —
How came this carle here
Without the leave o' me?'

Old Song.

THE magistrate took the light out of the servant-maid's hand, and advanced to his scrutiny, like Diogenes in the street of Athens, lantern-in-hand, and probably with as little expectation as that of the cynic that he was likely to encounter any especial treasure in the course of his researches. The first whom he approached was my mysterious guide, who, seated on a table as I have already described him, with his eyes firmly fixed on the wall, his features arranged into the utmost inflexibility of expression, his hands folded on his breast with an air betwixt carelessness and defiance, his heel patting against the foot of the table, to keep time with the tune which he continued to whistle, submitted to Mr. Jarvie's investigation with an air of absolute confidence and assurance, which for a moment placed at fault the memory and sagacity of the acute and anxious investigator.

'Ah! Eh! Oh!' exclaimed the Bailie. 'My conscience! it's impossible; and yet — no! Conscience, it canna be! and yet again — deil hae me! that I suld say sae! Ye robber — ye cateran — ye born deevil that ye are, to a' bad ends and nae gude ane — can this be you?'

'E'en as ye see, Bailie,' was the laconic answer.

'Conscience! if I am na clean bumbaized! *you*, ye cheat-the-wuddy rogue, *you* here on your venture in the tolbooth o' Glasgow? What d'ye think's the value o' your head?'

'Umph! why, fairly weighed, and Dutch weight, it might

weigh down one provost's, four bailies', a town-clerk's, six deacons', besides stentmasters ——'

'Ah, ye reiving villain!' interrupted Mr. Jarvie. 'But tell ower your sins and prepare ye, for if I say the word ——'

'True, Bailie,' said he who was thus addressed, folding his hands behind him with the utmost *nonchalance*, 'but ye will never say that word.'

'And why suld I not, sir?' exclaimed the magistrate — 'why suld I not? Answer me that; why suld I not?'

'For three sufficient reasons, Bailie Jarvie. First, for auld langsyne; second, for the sake of the auld wife ayont the fire at Stuckavallachan, that made some mixture of our bluids, to my own proper shame be it spoken! that has a cousin wi' accounts, and yarn winnles, and looms, and shuttles, like a mere mechanical person; and lastly, Bailie, because, if I saw a sign o' your betraying me, I would plaster that wa' with your harns ere the hand of man could rescue you!'

'Ye're a bauld desperate villain, sir,' retorted the undaunted Bailie; 'and ye ken that I ken ye to be sae, and that I wadna stand a moment for my ain risk.'

'I ken weel,' said the other, 'ye hae gentle bluid in your veins, and I wad be laith to hurt my ain kinsman. But I'll gang out here as free as I came in, or the very wa's o' Glasgow tolbooth shall tell o't these ten years to come.'

'Weel, weel,' said Mr. Jarvie, 'bluid's thicker than water; and it liesna in kith, kin, and ally to see motes in ilk other's een if other een see them no. It wad be sair news to the auld wife below the Ben of Stuckavallachan, that you, ye Hieland limmer, had knockit out my harns, or that I had kilted you up in a tow. But ye'll own, ye dour deevil, that were it no your very sell I wad hae grippit the best man in the Hielands.'

'Ye wad hae tried, cousin,' answered my guide, 'that I wot weel; but I doubt ye wad hae come aff wi' the short measure; for we gangthereout Hieland bodies are an unchancy generation when you speak to us o' bondage. We downa bide the coercion of gude braid-claith about our hinderlins, let abee breeks o' freestone and garters o' iron.'

'Ye'll find the stane breeks and the airn garters, ay, and the hemp cravat, for a' that, neighbour,' replied the Bailie. 'Nae man in a civilised country ever played the pliskies ye hae done; but e'en pickle in your ain pock-neuk, I hae gien ye warning.'

'Well, cousin,' said the other, 'ye'll wear black at my burial?'

'Deil a black cloak will be there, Robin, but the corbies and the hoodie-craws, I'se gie ye my hand on that. But whar's the gude thousand pund Scots that I lent ye, man, and when am I to see it again?'

'Where it is,' replied my guide, after the affectation of considering for a moment, 'I cannot justly tell; probably where last year's snaw is.'

'And that's on the tap of Schehallion, ye Hieland dog,' said Mr. Jarvie; 'and I look for payment frae you where ye stand.'

'Ay,' replied the Highlander, 'but I keep neither snaw nor dollars in my sporran. And as to when you'll see it — why, just "when the king enjoys his ain again," as the auld sang says.'

'Warst of a', Robin,' retorted the Glaswegian — 'I mean, ye disloyal traitor — warst of a'! Wad ye bring popery in on us, and arbitrary power, and a foist and a warming-pan, and the set forms, and the curates, and the auld enormities o' surplices and cearments? Ye had better stick to your auld trade o' theft-boot, black-mail, spreaghs, and gillravaging — better stealing nowt than ruining nations.'

'Hout, man, whisht wi' your Whiggery,' answered the Celt, 'we hae kend ane anither mony a long day. I'se take care your counting-room is no cleaned out when the gillon-a-naillie come to redd up the Glasgow buiths, and clear them o' their auld shop-wares. And, unless it just fa' in the preceese way o' your duty, ye maunna see me oftener, Nicol, than I am disposed to be seen.'

'Ye are a dauring villain, Rob,' answered the Bailie; 'and ye will be hanged, that will be seen and heard tell o'; but I'se ne'er be the ill bird and foul my nest, set apart strong necessity and the skreigh of duty, which no man should hear and be inobedient. And wha the deevil's this?' he continued, turning to me — 'some gillravager that ye hae listed, I daur say. He looks as if he had a bauld heart to the highway and a lang craig for the gibbet.'

'This, good Mr. Jarvie,' said Owen, who, like myself, had been struck dumb during this strange recognition and no less strange dialogue which took place betwixt these extraordinary kinsmen — 'this, good Mr. Jarvie, is young Mr. Frank Osbaldistone, only child of the head of our house, who should have been taken into our firm at the time Mr. Rashleigh Osbaldistone, his cousin, had the luck to be taken into it (here Owen could not suppress a groan). But, howsoever —'

'O, I have heard of that smaik,' said the Scotch merchant,

interrupting him ; ' it is he whom your principal, like an obstinate auld fule, wad make a merchant o', wad he or wad he no, and the lad turned a strolling stage-player in pure dislike to the labour an honest man should live by. Weel, sir, what say you to your handiwork ? Will Hamlet the Dane or Hamlet's ghost be good security for Mr. Owen, sir ?'

' I don't deserve your taunt,' I replied, ' though I respect your motive, and am too grateful for the assistance you have afforded Mr. Owen to resent it. My only business here was to do what I could — it is perhaps very little — to aid Mr. Owen in the management of my father's affairs. My dislike of the commercial profession is a feeling of which I am the best and sole judge.'

' I protest,' said the Highlander, ' I had some respect for this callant even before I kend what was in him ; but now I honour him for his contempt of weavers and spinners, and sic-like mechanical persons and their pursuits.'

' Ye're mad, Rob,' said the Bailie — ' mad as a March hare, though wherefore a hare suld be mad at March mair than at Martinmas is mair than I can weel say. Weavers ! deil shake ye out o' the web the weaver craft made. Spinners ! ye'll spin and wind yoursell a bonny pirn. And this young birkie here, that ye're hoying and hounding on the shortest road to the gallows and the deevil, will his stage-plays and his poetries help him here, d' ye think, ony mair than your deep oaths and drawn dirks, ye reprobate that ye are ? Will *Tityre tu patula*, as they ca' it, tell him where Rashleigh (Osbaldistone is ? or Macbeth, and all his kernes and galloglasses, and your awn to boot, Rob, procure him five thousand pounds to answer the bills which fall due ten days hence, were they a' roused at the Cross — basket-hilts, Andrea-Ferraras, leather targets, brogues, brechan, and sporrans ?'

' Ten days ?' I answered, and instinctively drew out Diana Vernon's packet ; and, the time being elapsed during which I was to keep the seal sacred, I hastily broke it open. A sealed letter fell from a blank inclosure, owing to the trepidation with which I opened the parcel. A slight current of wind, which found its way through a broken pane of the window, wafted the letter to Mr. Jarvie's feet, who lifted it, examined the address with unceremonious curiosity, and, to my astonishment, handed it to his Highland kinsman, saying, ' Here's a wind has blown a letter to its right owner, though there were ten thousand chances against its coming to hand.'

The Highlander, having examined the address, broke the letter open without the least ceremony. I endeavoured to interrupt his proceeding.

'You must satisfy me, sir,' said I, 'that the letter is intended for you before I can permit you to peruse it.'

'Make yourself quite easy, Mr. Osbaldistone,' replied the mountaineer, with great composure; 'remember Justice Inglewood, Clerk Jobson, Mr. Morris -- above all, remember your vera humble servant, Robert Cawmil, and the beautiful Diana Vernon. Remember all this, and doubt no longer that the letter is for me.'

I remained astonished at my own stupidity. Through the whole night the voice, and even the features, of this man, though imperfectly seen, haunted me with recollections to which I could assign no exact local or personal associations. But now the light dawned on me at once: this man was Campbell himself. His whole peculiarities flashed on me at once -- the deep strong voice; the inflexible, stern, yet considerate cast of features; the Scottish brogue, with its corresponding dialect and imagery, which, although he possessed the power at times of laying them aside, recurred at every moment of emotion, and gave pith to his sarcasm or vehemence to his expostulation. Rather beneath the middle size than above it, his limbs were formed upon the very strongest model that is consistent with agility, while, from the remarkable ease and freedom of his movements, you could not doubt his possessing the latter quality in a high degree of perfection. Two points in his person interfered with the rules of symmetry: his shoulders were so broad in proportion to his height as, notwithstanding the lean and lathy appearance of his frame, gave him something the air of being too square in respect to his stature; and his arms, though round, sinewy, and strong, were so very long as to be rather a deformity. I afterwards heard that this length of arm was a circumstance on which he prided himself; that when he wore his native Highland garb he could tie the garters of his hose without stooping; and that it gave him great advantage in the use of the broadsword, at which he was very dexterous. But certainly this want of symmetry destroyed the claim he might otherwise have set up to be accounted a very handsome man; it gave something wild, irregular, and, as it were, unearthly to his appearance, and reminded me involuntarily of the tales which Mabel used to tell of the old Picts who ravaged Northumberland in ancient

times, who, according to her tradition, were a sort of half-goblin, half-human beings, distinguished, like this man, for courage, cunning, ferocity, the length of their arms, and the squareness of their shoulders.

When, however, I recollected the circumstances in which we formerly met, I could not doubt that the billet was most probably designed for him. He had made a marked figure among those mysterious personages over whom Diana seemed to exercise an influence, and from whom she experienced an influence in her turn. It was painful to think that the fate of a being so amiable was involved in that of desperadoes of this man's description; yet it seemed impossible to doubt it. Of what use, however, could this person be to my father's affairs? I could think only of one. Rashleigh Osbaldistone had, at the instigation of Miss Vernon, certainly found means to produce Mr. Campbell when his presence was necessary to exculpate me from Morris's accusation. Was it not possible that her influence, in like manner, might prevail on Campbell to produce Rashleigh? Speaking on this supposition, I requested to know where my dangerous kinsman was, and when Mr. Campbell had seen him. The answer was indirect.

'It's a kittle cast she has gien me to play; but yet it's fair play, and I winna baulk her. Mr. Osbaldistone, I dwell not very far from hence; my kinsman can show you the way. Leave Mr. Owen to do the best he can in Glasgow; do you come and see me in the glens, and it's like I may pleasure you and stead your father in his extremity. I am but a poor man, but wit's better than wealth; and, cousin (turning from me to address Mr. Jarvie), if ye daur venture sae muckle as to eat a dish of Scotch collops and a leg o' red-deer venison wi' me, come ye wi' this Sassenach gentleman as far as Drymen or Bucklivie, or the Clachan of Aberfoil will be better than ony o' them, and I'll hae somebody waiting to weise ye the gate to the place where I may be for the time. What say ye, man? There's my thumb, I'll ne'er beguile thee.'

'Na, na, Robin,' said the cautious burgher, 'I seldom like to leave the Gorbals; I have nae freedom to gang amang your wild hills, Robin, and your kilted red-shanks, it disna become my place, man.'

'The devil damn your place and you baith!' reiterated Campbell. 'The only drap o' gentle bluid that's in your body was our great grand-uncle's that was justified at Dumbarton, and you set yourself up to say ye wad derogate frae your place

to visit me! Hark thee, man, I owe thee a day in harst; I'll pay up your thousan pund Scots, plack and bawbee, gin ye'll be an honest fallow for anes, and just daiker up the gate wi' this Sassenach.'

'Hout awa' wi' your gentility,' replied the Bailie; 'carry your gentle bluid to the Cross, and see what ye'll buy wi't. But if I *were* to come, wad ye really and soothfastly pay me the siller?'

'I swear to ye,' said the Highlander, 'upon the halidome of him that sleeps beneath the grey stane at Inch Cailleach.'¹

'Sae nae mair, Robin — sae nae mair. We'll see what may be dune. But ye maunna expect me to gang ower the Highland line. I'll gae beyond the line at no rate. Ye maun meet me about Bucklivie or the Clachan of Aberfoil, and dinna forget the needful.'

'Nae fear — nae fear,' said Campbell, 'I'll be as true as the steel blade that never failed its master. But I must be budging, cousin, for the air o' Glasgow tolbooth is no that ower salutary to a Highlander's constitution.'

'Troth,' replied the merchant, 'and if my duty were to be dune ye couldna change your atmosphere, as the minister ca's it, this ae wee while. Ochon, that I suld ever be concerned in aiding and abetting an escape frae justice! it will be a shame and disgrace to me and mine, and my very father's memory, for ever.'

'Hout tout, man, let that flee stick in the wa',' answered his kinsman; 'when the dirt's dry it will rub out. Your father, honest man, could look ower a friend's fault as weel as anither.'

'Ye may be right, Robin,' replied the Bailie, after a moment's reflection; 'he was a considerate man the deacon; he kend we had a' our frailties, and he lo'ed his friends. Ye'll no hae forgotten him, Robin?' This question he put in a softened tone, conveying as much at least of the ludicrous as the pathetic.

'Forgotten him!' replied his kinsman, 'what suld ail me to forget him? a wapping weaver he was, and wrought my first pair o' hose. But come awa', kinsman,

Come fill up my cap, come fill up my cann,
Come saddle my horses and call up my man;
Come open your gates and let me gae free,
I daurna stay langer in bonny Dundee.'

'Whisht, sir!' said the magistrate, in an authoritative tone,

¹ See Note 6.

·lilting and singing sae near the latter end o' the Sabbath ! This house may hear ye sing anither tune yet. Aweel, we hae a' backslidings to answer for. Stanchells, open the door.'

The jailor obeyed, and we all sallied forth. Stanchells looked with some surprise at the two strangers, wondering, doubtless, how they came into these premises without his knowledge ; but Mr. Jarvie's 'Friends o' mine, Stanchells — friends o' mine,' silenced all disposition to inquiries. We now descended into the lower vestibule, and hallooed more than once for Dougal, to which summons no answer was returned ; when Campbell observed, with a sardonic smile, 'That if Dougal was the lad he kent him, he would scarce wait to get thanks for his ain share of the night's wark, but was in all probability on the full trot to the pass of Ballamaha —'

'And left us, and abune a' me mysell, locked up in the tolbooth a' night !' exclaimed the Bailie, in ire and perturbation. 'Ca' for fore-hammers, sledge-hammers, pinches, and coulterers ; send for Deacon Yettlin, the smith, and let him ken that Bailie Jarvie's shut up in the tolbooth by a Hieland blackguard, whom he'll hang up as high as Haman —'

'When ye catch him,' said Campbell, gravely ; 'but stay, the door is surely not locked.'

Indeed, on examination, we found that the door was not only left open, but that Dougal in his retreat had, by carrying off the keys along with him, taken care that no one should exercise his office of porter in a hurry.

'He has glimmerings o' common sense now, that creature Dougal,' said Campbell ; 'he kend an open door might hae served me at a pinch.'

We were by this time in the street.

'I tell you, Robin,' said the magistrate, 'in my pair mind, if ye live the life ye do, ye shuld hae ane o' your gillies door-keeper in every jail in Scotland, in case o' the warst.'

'Ane o' my kinsmen a bailie in ilka burgh will just do as weel, cousin Nicol ; so gude-night, or gude-morning, to ye ; and forget not the Clachan of Aberfoil.'

And without waiting for an answer, he sprung to the other side of the street and was lost in darkness. Immediately on his disappearance we heard him give a low whistle of peculiar modulation, which was instantly replied to.

'Hear to the Hieland deevils,' said Mr. Jarvie ; 'they think themselves on the skirts of Ben Lomond already, where they may gang whewing and whistling about without minding Sunday

or Saturday.' Here he was interrupted by something which fell with a heavy clash on the street before us. 'Gude guide us! what's this mair o't? Mattie, haud up the lantern. Conscience! if it isna the keys. Weel, that's just as weel; they cost the burgh siller, and there might hae been some clavers about the loss o' them. O, an Bailie Grahame were to get word o' this night's job it would be a sair hair in my neck!

As we were still but a few steps from the tolbooth door, we carried back these implements of office, and consigned them to the head jailor, who, in lieu of the usual mode of making good his post by turning the keys, was keeping sentry in the vestibule till the arrival of some assistant, whom he had summoned in order to replace the Celtic fugitive Dougal.

Having discharged this piece of duty to the burgh, and my road lying the same way with the honest magistrate's, I profited by the light of his lantern, and he by my arm, to find our way through the streets, which, whatever they may now be, were then dark, uneven, and ill-paved. Age is easily propitiated by attentions from the young. The Bailie expressed himself interested in me, and added, 'That, since I was nane o' that play-acting and play-ganging generation, whom his saul hated, he wad be glad if I wad eat a reisted haddock or a fresh herring at breakfast wi' him the morn, and meet my friend, Mr. Owen, whom by that time he would place at liberty.'

'My dear sir,' said I, when I had accepted of the invitation with thanks, 'how could you possibly connect me with the stage?'

'I watna,' replied Mr. Jarvie; 'it was a bletherin' phrasin' chield they ca' Fairservice, that cam at e'en to get an order to send the crier through the town for ye at skreigh o' day the morn. He tell't me whae ye were, and how ye were sent frae your father's house because ye wadna be a dealer, and that ye mightna disgrace your family wi' gangin' on the stage. Ane Hammorgaw, our precentor, brought him here, and said he was an auld acquaintance; but I sent them baith awa' wi' a flae in their lug for bringing me sic an erran' on sic a night. But I see he's a fule-creature a'thegither, and clean mista'en about ye. I like ye, man,' he continued; 'I like a lad that will stand by his friends in trouble: I aye did it mysell, and sae did the deacon my father, rest and bless him! But ye suldna keep ower muckle company wi' Hielandmen and thae wild cattle. Can a man touch pitch and no be defiled? aye mind that. Nae doubt the best and wisest may err.

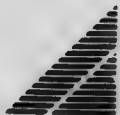
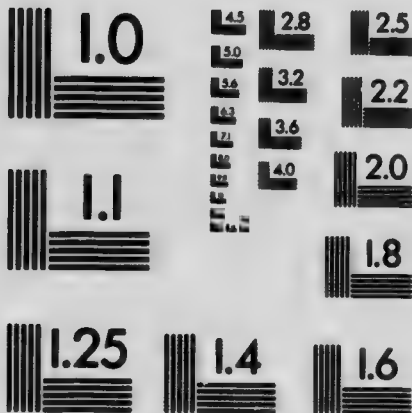
Once, twice, and thrice have I backslidden, man, and dune three things this night my father wadna hae believed his een if he could hae looked up and seen me do them.'

He was by this time arrived at the door of his own dwelling. He paused, however, on the threshold, and went on in a solemn tone of deep contrition: 'Firstly, I hae thought my ain thoughts on the Sabbath; secondly, I hae gien security for an Englishman; and, in the third and last place, well-a-day! I hae let an ill-doer escape from the place of imprisonment. But there's balm in Gilead, Mr. Osbaldistone. Mattie, I can let mysell in; see Mr. Osbaldistone to Luckie Flyter's, at the corner o' the wynd. Mr. Osbaldistone (in a whisper) ye'll offer nae incivility to Mattie; she's an honest man's daughter, and a near cousin o' the Laird o' Limmerfield's.'



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CHAPTER XXIV

Will it please your worship to accept of my poor service? I beseech that I may feed upon your bread, though it be the brownest, and drink of your drink, though it be of the smallest; for I will do your worship as much service for forty shillings as another man shall for three pounds.

GREENE'S *Tu Quoque*.

I REMEMBERED the honest Bailie's parting charge, but did not conceive there was any incivility in adding a kiss to the half-crown with which I remunerated Mattie's attendance; nor did her 'Fie for shame, sir,' express any very deadly resentment of the affront. Repeated knocking at Mrs. Flyter's gate awakened in due order, first, one or two stray dogs, who began to bark with all their might; next, two or three night-capped heads, which were thrust out of the neighbouring windows to reprehend me for disturbing the solemnity of the Sunday night by that untimely noise. While I trembled lest the thunders of their wrath might dissolve in showers like that of Xantippe, Mrs. Flyter herself awoke, and began, in a tone of objurcation not unbecoming the philosophical spouse of Socrates, to scold one or two loiterers in her kitchen for not hastening to the door to prevent a repetition of my noisy summons.

These worthies were, indeed, nearly concerned in the fracas which their laziness occasioned, being no other than the faithful Mr. Fairservice, with his friend Mr. Hammorgaw, and another person, whom I afterwards found to be the town-crier, who were sitting over a cog of ale, as they called it (at my expense, as my bill afterwards informed me), in order to devise the terms and style of a proclamation to be made through the streets the next day, in order that 'the unfortunate young gentleman,' as they had the impudence to qualify me, might be restored to his friends without farther delay. It may be supposed that I did not suppress my displeasure at this impertinent interference with my affairs; but Andrew set up such ejaculations of transport at my arrival as fairly drowned my expressions of resent-

ment. His raptures, perchance, were partly political; and the tears of joy which he shed had certainly their source in that noble fountain of emotion, the tankard. However, the tumultuous glee which he felt, or pretended to feel, at my return saved Andrew the broken head which I had twice destined him; first, on account of the colloquy he had held with the precentor on my affairs; and secondly, for the impertinent history he had thought proper to give of me to Mr. Jarvie. I, however, contented myself with slapping the door of my bedroom in his face as he followed me, praising Heaven for my safe return, and mixing his joy with admonitions to me to take care how I walked my own ways in future. I then went to bed, resolving my first business in the morning should be to discharge this troublesome, pedantic, self-conceited coxcomb, who seemed so much disposed to constitute himself rather a preceptor than a domestic.

Accordingly in the morning I resumed my purpose, and, calling Andrew into my apartment, requested to know his charge for guiding and attending me as far as Glasgow. Mr. Fairservice looked very blank at this demand, justly considering it as a presage to approaching dismissal.

'Your honour,' he said, after some hesitation, 'wunna think — wunna think —'

'Speak out, you rascal, or I'll break your head,' said I, as Andrew, between the double risk of losing all by asking too much, or a part by stating his demand lower than what I might be willing to pay, stood gasping in the agony of doubt and calculation.

Out it came with a bolt, however, at my threat, as the kind violence of a blow on the back sometimes delivers the windpipe from an intrusive morsel. 'Aughteen pennies sterling *per diem* — that is, by the day — your honour wadna think unconscionable?'

'It is double what is usual, and treble what you merit, Andrew; but there's a guinea for you, and get about your business.'

'The Lord forgie us! Is your honour mad?' exclaimed Andrew.

'No; but I think you mean to make me so. I giv: you a third above your demand, and you stand staring and expostulating there as if I were cheating you. Take your money and go about your business.'

'Gude safe us!' continued Andrew, 'in what can I hae

offended your honour? Certainly a' flesh is but as flowers of the field; but if a bed of camomile hath value in medicine, of a surety the use of Andrew Fairservice to your honour is nothing less evident; it's as muckle as your life's worth to part wi' me.

'Upon my honour,' replied I, 'it is difficult to say whether you are more knave or fool. So you intend then to remain with me whether I like it or no?'

'Troth, I was e'en thinking sae,' replied Andrew, dogmatically; 'for, if your honour disna ken when ye hae a gude servant, I ken when I hae a gude master, and the deil be in my feet gin I leave ye; and there's the brief and the lang o't. Besides, I hae received nae regular warning to quit my place.'

'Your place, sir!' said I; 'why, you are no hired servant of mine; you are merely a guide, whose knowledge of the country I availed myself of on my road.'

'I am no just a common servant, I admit, sir,' remonstrated Mr. Fairservice; 'but your honour kens I quitted a gude place at an hour's notice to comply wi' your honour's solicitations. A man might make honestly and wi' a clear conscience twenty sterling pounds per annum, weel counted siller, o' the garden at Osbaldistone Hall, and I wasna likely to gie up a' that for a guinea, I trow. I reckoned on staying wi' your honour to the m's end at the least o't; and I account upon my wage, board-wage, fee and bountith — ay, to that length o't at the least.'

'Come, come, sir,' replied I, 'these impudent pretensions won't serve your turn; and if I hear any more of them I shall convince you that Squire Thorncliff is not the only one of my name that can use his fingers.'

While I spoke thus, the whole matter struck me as so ridiculous that, though really angry, I had some difficulty to forbear laughing at the gravity with which Andrew supported a plea so utterly extravagant. The rascal, aware of the impression he had made on my muscles, was encouraged to perseverance. He judged it safer, however, to take his pretensions a peg lower in case of overstraining at the same time both his plea and my patience.

'Admitting that my honour con part with a faithful servant that had served me and mine by day and night for twenty years, in a strange place, and at a moment's warning, he was weel assured,' he said, 'it wasna in my heart nor in no true gentleman's, to pit a puir lad like himsell, that had come forty or fifty, or say a hundred, miles out o' his road purely to

bear my honour company, and that had nae ha'ing but his penny-fee, to sic a hardship as this comes to.'

'I think it was you, Will, who once told me that, to be an obstinate man, I am in certain things the most gullible and malleable of mortals. The fact is that it is only contradiction which makes me peremptory, and when I do not feel myself called on to give battle to any proposition, I am always willing to grant it, rather than give myself much trouble. I knew this fellow to be a greedy, tiresome, meddling coxcomb; still, however, I must have some one about me in the quality of guide and domestic, and I was so much used to Andrew's humour that on some occasions it was rather amusing. In the state of indecision to which these reflections led me, I asked Fairservice if he knew the roads, towns, etc., in the north of Scotland, to which my father's concerns with the proprietors of Highland forests were likely to lead me. I believe if I had asked him the road to the terrestrial paradise he would have at that moment undertaken to guide me to it; so that I had reason afterwards to think myself fortunate in finding that his actual knowledge did not fall very much short of that which he asserted himself to possess. I fixed the amount of his wages, and reserved to myself the privilege of dismissing him when I chose, on paying him a week in advance. I gave him finally a severe lecture on his conduct of the preceding day, and then dismissed him, rejoicing at heart, though somewhat crestfallen in countenance, to rehearse to his friend, the precentor, who was taking his morning draught in the kitchen, the mode in which he had 'cuitled up the daft young English squire.'

Agreeable to appointment, I went next to Bailie Nicol Jarvie's, where a comfortable morning's repast was arranged in the parlour, which served as an apartment of all hours, and almost all work, to that honest gentleman. The bustling and benevolent magistrate had been as good as his word. I found my friend Owen at liberty, and, conscious of the refreshments and purification of brush and basin, was of course a very different person from Owen a prisoner, squalid, heart-broken, and hopeless. Yet the sense of pecuniary difficulties arising behind, before, and around him had depressed his spirit, and the almost paternal embrace which the good man gave me was embittered by a sigh of the deepest anxiety. And when he sate down, the heaviness in his eye and manner, so different from the quiet composed satisfaction which they usually exhibited, indicated that he was employing his arithmetic in mentally numbering

up the days, the hours, the minutes which yet remained as an interval between the dishonour of bills and the downfall of the great commercial establishment of Osbaldistone and Tresham. It was left to me, therefore, to do honour to our landlord's hospitable cheer—to his tea, right from China, which he got in a present from some eminent ship's husband at Wapping; to his coffee, from a snug plantation of his own, as he informed us with a wink, called Salt Market Grove, in the island of Jamaica; to his English toast and ale, his Scotch dried salmon, his Loch Fyne herrings, and even to the double damask tablecloth, 'wrought by no hand, as you may guess,' save that of his deceased father the worthy Deacon Jarvie.

Having conciliated our good-humoured host by those little attentions which are great to most men, I endeavoured in my turn to gain from him some information which might be useful for my guidance, as well as for the satisfaction of my curiosity. We had not hitherto made the least allusion to the transactions of the preceding night, a circumstance which made my question sound somewhat abrupt when, without any previous introduction of the subject, I took advantage of a pause when the history of the tablecloth ended, and that of the napkins was about to commence, to inquire, 'Pray, by the by, Mr. Jarvie, who may this Mr. Robert Campbell be whom we met with last night?'

'The interrogatory seemed to strike the honest magistrate, to use the vulgar phrase, 'all of a heap,' and, instead of answering, he returned the question—'Whae's Mr. Robert Campbell? ahem—ahay! Whae's Mr. Robert Campbell, quo' he?'

'Yes,' said I, 'I mean who and what is he?'

'Why, he's—ahay!—he's—ahem! Where did ye meet with Mr. Robert Campbell, as ye ca' him?'

'I met him by chance,' I replied, 'some months ago, in the north of England.'

'Ou then, Mr. Osbaldistone,' said the Bailie, doggedly, 'ye'll ken as muckle about him as I do.'

'I should suppose not, Mr. Jarvie,' I replied; 'you are his relation, it seems, and his friend.'

'There is some cousin-red between us, doubtless,' said the Bailie, reluctantly; 'but we hae seen little o' ilk other since Rob gae up the cattle line o' dealing. Poor fallow! he was hardly guided by them might hae used him better; and they haena made their plack a bawbee o't neither. There's mony ane this

day wad rather they had never chased puir Robin frae the Cross o' Glasgow; there's mony ane wad rather see him again at the tail o' three hundred kyloes than at the head o' thirty waur cattle.'

'All this explains nothing to me, Mr. Jarvie, of Mr. Campbell's rank, habits of life, and means of subsistence,' I replied.

'Rank!' said Mr. Jarvie. 'He's a Hieland gentleman, nae doubt; better rank need nane to be; and for habit, I judge he wears the Hieland habit amang the hills, though he has breeks on when he comes to Glasgow; and as for his subsistence, what needs we care about his subsistence, sae lang as he asks naething frae us, ye ken. But I hae nae time for clavering about him e'en now, because we maun look into your father's concerns wi' a' speed.'

So saying, he put on his spectacles and sate down to examine Mr. Owen's states, which the other thought it most prudent to communicate to him without reserve. I knew enough of business to be aware that nothing could be more acute and sagacious than the views which Mr. Jarvie entertained of the matters submitted to his examination; and, to do him justice, it was marked by much fairness and even liberality. He scratched his ear indeed repeatedly on observing the balance which stood at the debit of Osbaldistone and Tresham in account with himself personally.

'It may be a dead loss,' he observed; 'and, conscience! whate'er ane o' your Lombard Street goldsmiths may say to it, it's a snell ane in the Street Market o' Glasgow. It will be a heavy deficit—a staff o' my bicker, I trow. But what then? I trust the house wunna coup the crans for a' that's come and gane yet; and if it does, I'll never bear sae base a mind as thae corbies in the Gallowgate; an I am to lose by ye, I'se ne'er deny I hae won by ye mony a fair pund sterling. Sae, an it come to the warst, I'se e'en lay the head o' the sow to the tail o' the grice.'

I did not altogether understand the proverbial arrangement with which Mr. Jarvie consoled himself, but I could easily see that he took a kind and friendly interest in the arrangement of my father's affairs, suggested several expedients, approved several plans proposed by Owen, and, by his countenance and counsel, greatly abated the gloom upon the brow of that afflicted delegate of my father's establishment.

As I was an idle spectator on this occasion, and perhaps as I showed some inclination more than once to return to the

prohibited, and apparently the puzzling, subject of Mr. Campbell, Mr. Jarvie dismissed me with little formality, with an advice to 'gang up the gate to the college, where I wad find some chields could speak Greek and Latin weel — at least they got plenty o' siller for doing deil haet else, if they didna do that; and where I might read a spell o' the worthy Mr. Zachary Boyd's translation o' the Scriptures; better poetry need ane to be, as he had been tell'd by them that kend, or suld hae kend, about sic things.' But he seasoned this dismissal with a kind and hospitable invitation 'to come back and take part o' his family-chack, at ane preceesely; there wad be a leg o' mutton, and, it might be, a tup's head, for they were in season.' But, above all, I was to return at 'ane o'clock preceesely: it was the hour he and the deacon his father aye dined at; they pat it aff for naething nor for naebody.'

CHAPTER XXV

So stands the Thracian herdsman with his spear
Full in the gap, and hopes the hunted bear ;
And hears him in the rustling wood, and sees
His course at distance by the bending trees,
And thinks — Here comes my mortal enemy,
And either he must fall in fight, or I.

Palamon and Arcite.

I TOOK the route towards the college, as recommended by Mr. Jarvie, less with the intention of seeking for any object of interest or amusement, than to arrange my own ideas and meditate on my future conduct. I wandered from one quadrangle of old-fashioned buildings to another, and from thence to the college yards, or walking-ground, where, pleased with the solitude of the place, most of the students being engaged in their classes, I took several turns, pondering on the waywardness of my own destiny.

I could not doubt, from the circumstances attending my first meeting with this person Campbell, that he was engaged in some strangely desperate courses ; and the reluctance with which Mr. Jarvie alluded to his person or pursuits, as well as all the scene of the preceding night, tended to confirm these suspicions. Yet to this man Diana Vernon had not, it would seem, hesitated to address herself in my behalf ; and the conduct of the magistrate himself towards him showed an odd mixture of kindness, and even respect, with pity and censure. Something there must be uncommon in Campbell's situation and character ; and what was still more extraordinary, it seemed that his fate was doomed to have influence over, and connexion with, my own. I resolved to bring Mr. Jarvie to close quarters on the first proper opportunity, and learn as much as was possible on the subject of this mysterious person, in order that I might judge whether it was possible for me, without prejudice to my reputation, to hold that degree of farther correspondence with him to which he seemed to invite.

While I was musing on these subjects, my attention was attracted by three persons who appeared at the upper end of the walk through which I was sauntering, seemingly engaged in very earnest conversation. That intuitive impression which announces to us the approach of whomsoever we love or hate with intense vehemence, long before a more indifferent eye can recognise their persons, flashed upon my mind the sure conviction that the midmost of those three men was Rashleigh Osbaldistone. To address him was my first impulse: my second was to watch him until he was alone, or at least to reconnoitre his companions before confronting him. The party was still at such distance, and engaged in such deep discourse, that I had time to step unobserved to the other side of a small hedge which imperfectly screened the alley in which I was walking.

It was at this period the fashion of the young and gay to wear, in their morning walks, a scarlet cloak, often laced and embroidered, above their other dress, and it was the trick of the time for gallants occasionally to dispose it so as to muffle a part of the face. The imitating this fashion, with the degree of shelter which I received from the hedge, enabled me to meet my cousin unobserved by him or the others, except perhaps as a passing stranger. I was not a little startled at recognising in his companions that very Morris on whose account I had been summoned before Justice Inglewood, and Mr. MacVittie the merchant, from whose starched and severe aspect I had recoiled on the preceding day.

A more ominous conjunction to my own affairs and those of my father could scarce have been formed. I remembered Morris's false accusation against me, which he might be as easily induced to recall as he had been intimate to withdraw; I recollected the inauspicious influence of MacVittie over my father's affairs, testified by the imprisonment of Owen; and I now saw both these men combined with one whose talents for mischief I deemed little inferior to those of the great author of all ill, and my abhorrence of whom almost amounted to dread.

When they had passed me for some paces I turned and followed them unobserved. At the end of the walk they separated, Morris and MacVittie leaving the gardens, and Rashleigh returning alone through the walks. I was now determined to confront him, and demand reparation for the injuries he had done my father, though in what form redress

was likely to be rendered remained to be known. This, however, I trusted to chance; and, flinging back the cloak in which I was muffled, I passed through a gap of the low hedge and presented myself before Rashleigh, as, in a deep reverie, he paced down the avenue.

Rashleigh was no man to be surprised or thrown off his guard by sudden occurrences. Yet he did not find me thus close to him, wearing undoubtedly in my face the marks of that indignation which was glowing in my bosom, without visibly starting at an apparition so sudden and so menacing.

'You are well met, sir,' was my commencement; 'I was about to take a long and doubtful journey in quest of you.'

'You know little of him you sought then,' replied Rashleigh, with his usual undaunted composure. 'I am easily found by my friends, still more easily by my foes; your manner compels me to ask in which class I must rank Mr. Francis Osbaldistone?'

'In that of your foes, sir,' I answered — 'in that of your mortal foes, unless you instantly do justice to your benefactor, my father, by accounting for his property.'

'And to whom, Mr. Osbaldistone,' answered Rashleigh, 'am I, a member of your father's commercial establishment, to be compelled to give any account of my proceedings in those concerns which are in every respect identified with my own? Surely not to a young gentleman whose exquisite taste for literature would render such discussions disgusting and unintelligible.'

'Your sneer, sir, is no answer; I will not part with you until I have full satisfaction concerning the fraud you meditate; you shall go with me before a magistrate.'

'Be it so,' said Rashleigh, and made a step or two as if to accompany me; then pausing, proceeded: 'Were I inclined to do as you would have me, you should soon feel which of us has most reason to dread the presence of a magistrate. But I have no wish to accelerate your fate. Go, young man! amuse yourself in your world of poetical imaginations, and leave the business of life to those who understand and can conduct it.'

His intention, I believe, was to provoke me, and he succeeded. 'Mr. Osbaldistone,' I said, 'this tone of calm insolence shall not avail you. You ought to be aware that the name we both bear never submitted to insult, and shall not in my person be exposed to it.'

'You remind me,' said Rashleigh, with one of his blackest

looks, 'that it was dishonoured in my person! and you remind me also by whom! Do you think I have forgotten the evening at Osbaldistone Hall when you cheaply and with impunity played the bully at my expense? For that insult, never to be washed out but by blood! for the various times you have crossed my path, and always to my prejudice; for the persevering folly with which you seek to traverse schemes the importance of which you neither know nor are capable of estimating—for all these, sir, you owe me a long account, for which there shall come an early day of reckoning.'

'Let it come when it will,' I replied, 'I shall be willing and ready to meet it. Yet you seem to have forgotten the heaviest article—that I had the pleasure to aid Miss Vernon's good sense and virtuous feeling in extricating her from your infamous coils.'

I think his dark eyes flashed actual fire at this home-taunt, and yet his voice retained the same calm expressive tone with which he had hitherto conducted the conversation.

'I had other views with respect to you, young man,' was his answer; 'less hazardous for you, and more suitable to my present character and former education. But I see you will draw on yourself the personal chastisement your boyish insolence so well merits. Follow me to a more remote spot, where we are less likely to be interrupted.'

I followed him accordingly, keeping a strict eye on his motions, for I believed him capable of the very worst actions. We reached an open spot in a sort of wilderness, laid out in the Dutch taste, with clipped hedges and one or two statues. I was on my guard, and it was well with me that I was so; for Rashleigh's sword was out and at my breast ere I could throw down my cloak or get my weapon unsheathed, so that I only saved my life by springing a pace or two backwards. He had some advantage in the difference of our weapons; for his sword, as I recollect, was longer than mine, and had one of those bayonet or three-cornered blades which are now generally worn; whereas mine was what we then called a Saxon blade—narrow, flat, and two-edged, and scarcely so manageable as that of my enemy. In other respects we were pretty equally matched; for what advantage I might possess in superior address and agility was fully counterbalanced by Rashleigh's great strength and coolness. He fought, indeed, more like a fiend than a man—with concentrated spite and desire of blood, only allayed by that cool consideration which made his worst actions appear yet

worse from the air of deliberate premeditation which seemed to accompany them. His obvious malignity of purpose never for a moment threw him off his guard, and he exhausted every ruse and stratagem proper to the science of defence; while at the same time he meditated the most desperate catastrophe to our rencounter.

On my part the combat was at first sustained with more moderation. My passions, though hasty, were not malevolent; and the walk of two or three minutes' space gave me time to reflect that Rashleigh was my father's nephew, the son of an uncle who, after his fashion, had been kind to me, and that his falling by my hand could not but occasion much family distress. My first resolution, therefore, was to attempt to disarm my antagonist—a manœuvre in which, confiding in my superiority of skill and practice, I anticipated little difficulty. I found, however, I had met my match; and one or two foils which I received, and from the consequences of which I narrowly escaped, obliged me to observe more caution in my mode of fighting. By degrees I became exasperated at the rancour with which Rashleigh sought my life, and returned his passes with an inveteracy resembling in some degree his own; so that the combat had all the appearance of being destined to have a tragic issue. That issue had nearly taken place at my expense. My foot slipped in a full lunge which I made at my adversary, and I could not so far recover myself as completely to parry the thrust with which my pass was repaid. Yet it took but partial effect, running through my waistcoat, grazing my ribs, and passing through my coat behind. The hilt of Rashleigh's sword, so great was the vigour of his thrust, struck against my breast with such force as to give me great pain, and confirm me in the momentary belief that I was mortally wounded. Eager for revenge, I grappled with my enemy, seizing with my left hand the hilt of his sword, and shortening my own with the purpose of running him through the body. Our death-grapple was interrupted by a man who forcibly threw himself between us, and, pushing us separate from each other, exclaimed, in a loud and commanding voice, 'What! the sons of those fathers who sucked the same breast shedding each other's blood as it were strangers! By the hand of my father, I will cleave to the brisket the first man that mints another stroke!'

I looked up in astonishment. The speaker was no other than Campbell. He had a basket hilted broadsword drawn in his hand, which he made to whistle around his head as he spoke,

as if for the purpose of enforcing his mediation. Rashleigh and I stared in silence at this unexpected intruder, who proceeded to exhort us alternately: 'Do you, Maister Francis, opine that ye will re-establish your father's credit by cutting your kinsman's thrapple, or getting your ain sneekit instead thereof in the college yards of Glasgow? Or do you, Mr. Rashleigh, think men will trust their lives and fortunes wi' ane that, when in point of trust and in point of confidence wi' a great political interest, gangs about brawling like a drunken gillie? Nay, never look gash or grim at me, man; if ye're angry, ye ken how to turn the buckle o' your belt behind you.'

'You presume on my present situation,' replied Rashleigh, 'or you would have hardly dared to interfere where my honour is concerned.'

'Hout, tout, tout! Presume! And what for should it be presuming? Ye may be the richer man, Mr. Osbaldistone, as is maist likely; and ye may be the mair learned man, whilk I dispute not; but I reckon ye are neither a prettier man nor a better gentleman than mysell, and it will be news to me when I hear ye are as gude. And *dare* too! Muckle daring there's about it; I trow here I stand, that hae slashed as het a haggis as ony o' the twa o' ye, and thought nae muckle o' my morning's wark when it was dune. If my foot were on the heather as it's on the causeway, or this pickle gravel, that's little better, I hae been waur mistrusted than if I were set to gie ye baith your ser'ing o't.'

Rashleigh had by this time recovered his temper completely. 'My kinsman,' he said, 'will acknowledge he forced this quarrel on me. It was none of my seeking. I am glad we are interrupted before I chastised his forwardness more severely.'

'Are ye hurt, lad?' inquired Campbell of me, with some appearance of interest.

'A very slight scratch,' I answered, 'which my kind cousin would not long have boasted of had not you come between us.'

'In troth, and that's true, Maister Rashleigh,' said Campbell; 'for the cauld iron and your best bluid were like to hae become acquaint when I mastered Mr. Frank's right hand. But never look like a sow playing upon a trump for the luvie o' that, man; come and walk wi' me. I hae news to tell ye, and ye'll cool and come to yoursell like MacGibbon's crowd, when he set it out at the window-bole.'

'Pardon me, sir,' said I. 'Your intentions have seemed friendly to me on more occasions than one; but I must not,

and will not, quit sight of this person until he yields up to me those means of doing justice to my father's engagements of which he has treacherously possessed himself.'

'Ye're daft, man,' replied Campbell; 'it will serve ye naething to follow us e'enow. Ye hae just enow o' ae man, wad ye bring twa on your head, and might bide quiet?'

'Twenty,' I replied, 'if it be necessary.'

I laid my hand on Rashleigh's collar, who made no resistance, but said, with a sort of scornful smile, 'You hear him, MacGregor! he rushes on his fate; will it be my fault if he falls into it? The warrants are by this time ready, and all is prepared.'

The Scotchman was obviously embarrassed. He looked around, and before, and behind him, and then said: 'The ne'er a bit will I yield my consent to his being ill-guided for standing up for the father that got him; and I gie God's malison and mine to a' sort o' magistrates, justices, bailies, sheriffs, sheriff-officers, constables, and sic-like black cattle, that hae been the plagues o' puir auld Scotland this hunder year. It was a merry warld when every man held his ain gear wi' his ain grip, and when the country-side wasna fashed wi' warrants and poudings and apprizings, and a' that cheatry craft. And ance mair I say it, my conscience winna see this puir thoughtless lad ill-guided, and especially wi' that sort o' trade. I wad rather ye fell till't again, and fought it out like douce honest men.'

'Your conscience, MacGregor!' said Rashleigh; 'you forget how long you and I have known each other.'

'Yes, my conscience,' reiterated Campbell, or MacGregor, or whatever was his name; 'I hae such a thing about me, Maister Osbaldistone; and therein it may weel chance that I hae the better o' you. As to our knowledge of each other, if ye ken what I am, ye ken what usage it was made me what I am; and, whatever you may think, I would not change states with the proudest of the oppressors that hae driven me to tak the heather-bush for a beild. What *you* are, Maister Rashleigh, and what excuse ye hae for being *what* you are, is between your ain heart and the lang day. And now, Maister Francis, let go his collar; for he says truly, that ye are in mair danger from a magistrate than he is, and were your cause as straight as an arrow he wad find a way to put you wrang. So let go his craig, as I was saying.'

He seconded his words with an effort so sudden and unex-

pected that he freed Rashleigh from my hold, and securing me, notwithstanding my struggles, in his own Herculean gripe, he called out, 'Take the bent, Mr. Rashleigh. Make ae pair o' legs worth twa pair o' hands; ye hae dune that before now.'

'You may thank this gentleman, kinsman,' said Rashleigh, 'if I leave any part of my debt to you unpaid; and if I quit you now, it is only in the hope we shall soon meet again, without the possibility of interruption.'

He took up his sword, wiped it, sheathed it, and was lost among the bushes.

The Scotchman, partly by force, partly by remonstrance, prevented my following him; indeed, I began to be of opinion my doing so would be to little purpose.

'As I live by bread,' said Campbell, when, after one or two struggles, in which he used much forbearance towards me, he perceived me inclined to stand quiet, 'I never saw sae daft a callant! I wad hae gien the best man in the country the breadth o' his back gin he had gien me sic a kemping as ye hae dune. What wad ye do? Wad ye follow the wolf to his den? I tell ye, man, he has the auld trap set for ye. He has got the collector-creature Morris to bring up a' the auld story again, and ye maun look for nae help frae me here, as ye got at Justice Inglewood's. It isna good for my health to come in the gate o' the Whigamore bailie bodies. Now gang your ways hame, like a gude bairn; jouk and let the jaw gae bye. Keep out o' sight o' Rashleigh and Morris and that MacVittie animal. Mind the Clachan of Aberfoil, as I said before, and, by the word of a gentleman, I wunna see ye wrangled. But keep a calm sough till we meet again; I maun gae and get Rashleigh out o' the town afore waur comes o't, for the neb o' him's never out o' mischief. Mind the Clachan of Aberfoil.'

He turned upon his heel and left me to meditate on the singular events which had befallen me. My first care was to adjust my dress and reassume my cloak, disposing it so as to conceal the blood which flowed down my right side. I had scarcely accomplished this when, the classes of the college being dismissed, the gardens began to be filled with parties of the students. I therefore left them as soon as possible; and in my way towards Mr. Jarvie's, whose dinner hour was now approaching, I stopped at a small unpretending shop, the sign of which intimated the indweller to be Christopher Nielson, surgeon and apothecary. I requested of a little boy who was pounding some stuff in a mortar that he would procure me an audience of this

learned pharmacopolist. He opened the door of the back-shop, where I found a lively elderly man, who shook his head incredulously at some idle account I gave him of having been wounded accidentally by the button breaking off my antagonist's foil while I was engaged in a fencing match. When he had applied some lint and somewhat else he thought proper to the trifling wound I had received, he observed, 'There never was button on the foil that made this hurt. Ah! young blood! young blood! But we surgeons are a secret generation. If it were not for hot blood and ill blood, what would become of the two learned faculties?'

With which moral reflection he dismissed me; and I experienced very little pain or inconvenience afterwards from the scratch I had received.

CHAPTER XXVI

An iron race the mountain-cliffs maintain,
Foes to the gentler genius of the plain.

Who, while their rocky ramparts round they see,
The rough abode of want and liberty,
As lawless force from confidence will grow,
Insult the plenty of the vales below.

GRAY.

'WHAT made ye sae late?' said Mr. Jarvie, as I entered the dining-parlour of that honest gentleman; 'it is chappit ane the best feck o' five minutes bye-gane. Mattie has been twice at the door wi' the dinner, and weel for you it was a tup's head, for that canna suffer by delay. A sheep's head ower muckle boiled is rank poison, as my worthy father used to say; he likit the lug o' ane weel, honest man.'

I made a suitable apology for my breach of punctuality, and was soon seated at table, where Mr. Jarvie presided with great glee and hospitality, compelling, however, Owen and myself to do rather more justice to the Scottish dainties with which his board was charged than was quite agreeable to our southern palates. I escaped pretty well, from having those habits of society which enable one to elude this species of well-meant persecution. But it was ridiculous enough to see Owen, whose ideas of politeness were more rigorous and formal, and who was willing, in all acts of lawful compliance, to evince his respect for the friend of the firm, eating with rueful complaisance mouthful after mouthful of singed wool, and pronouncing it excellent, in a tone in which disgust almost overpowered civility.

When the cloth was removed Mr. Jarvie compounded with his own hands a very small bowl of brandy-punch, the first which I had ever the fortune to see.

'The limes,' he assured us, 'were from his own little farm yonder-awa,' indicating the West Indies with a knowing shrug

of his shoulders, 'and he had learned the art of composing the liquor from auld Captain Coffinkey, who acquired it,' he added in a whisper, 'as maist folk thought, amang the buccaneers. But it's excellent liquor,' said he, helping us round; 'and good ware has aften come frae a wicked market. And as for Captain Coffinkey, he was a decent man when I kent him, only he used to swear awfully. But he's dead, and gaen to his account, and I trust he's accepted — I trust he's accepted.'

We found the liquor exceedingly palatable, and it led to a long conversation between Owen and our host on the opening which the Union had afforded to trade between Glasgow and the British colonies in America and the West Indies, and on the facilities which Glasgow possessed of making up *sortable* cargoes for that market. Mr. Jarvie answered some objection which Owen made on the difficulty of sorting a cargo for America without buying from England with vehemence and volubility.

'Na, na, sir, we stand on our ain bottom; we pickle in our ain pock-neuk. We hae our Stirling serges, Musselburgh stuffs, Aberdeen hose, Edinburgh shalloons, and the like, for our woollen or worsted goods; and we hae linens of a' kinds better and cheaper than you hae in Lunnin itsell; and we can buy your north o' England wares, as Manchester wares, Sheffield wares, and Newcastle earthenware, as cheap as you can at Liverpool; and we are making a fair spell at cottons and muslins. Na, na! let every herring hing by its ain head, and every sheep by its ain shank, and ye'll find, sir, us Glasgow folk no sae far ahint but what we may follow. This is but poor entertainment for you, Mr. Osbaldistone (observing that I had been for some time silent), but ye ken cadgers maun aye be speaking about cart-saddles.'

I apologised, alleging the painful circumstances of my own situation, and the singular adventures of the morning, as the causes of my abstraction and absence of mind. In this manner I gained what I sought — an opportunity of telling my story distinctly and without interruption. I only omitted mentioning the wound I had received, which I did not think worthy of notice. Mr. Jarvie listened with great attention and apparent interest, twinkling his little grey eye, and only interrupting me by brief interjections. When I came to the account of the rencounter, at which Owen folded his hand and cast up his eyes to Heaven, the very image of woeful surprise, Mr. Jarvie broke in upon the narration with 'Wrang now clean wrang: to draw a sword on your kinsman is inhibited

by the laws o' God and man; and to draw a sword on the streets of a royal burgh is punishable by fine and imprisonment; and the college yards are nae better privileged: they should be a place of peace and quietness, I trow. The college didna get gude £600 a-year out o' bishops' rents — sorrow fa' the brood o' bishops and their rents too! — nor yet a lease o' the archbishoprick o' Glasgow the sell o't, that they suld let folk tuilzie in their yards, or the wild callants bicker there wi' snaw-ba's as they whiles do, that when Mattie and I gae through we are fain to make a baik and a bow, or rin the risk o' our harns being knocked out — it suld be looked to.¹ But come awa' wi' your tale; what fell neist?

On my mentioning the appearance of Mr. Campbell, Jarvie arose in great surprise and paced the room, exclaiming, 'Robin again! Robert's mad — clean wud, and waur! Rob will be hanged and disgrace a' his kindred, and that will be seen and heard tell o'. My father the deacon wrought him his first hose; odd, I am thinking Deacon Threepie, the rape-spinner, will be twisting his last cravat. Ay, ay, puir Robin is in a fair way o' being hanged. But come awa' — come awa', let's hear the lave o't.'

I told the whole story as pointedly as I could; but Mr. Jarvie still found something lacking to make it clear, until I went back, though with considerable reluctance, on the whole story of Morris, and of my meeting with Campbell at the house of Justice Inglewood. Mr. Jarvie inclined a serious ear to all this, and remained silent for some time after I had finished my narrative.

'Upon all these matters I am now to ask your advice, Mr. Jarvie, which, I have no doubt, will point out the best way to act for my father's advantage and my own honour.'

'Ye're right, young man — ye're right,' said the Bailie. 'Aye take the counsel of those who are aulder and wiser than yoursell, and binna like the godless Rehoboam, who took the advice o' a wheen beardless callants, neglecting the auld counsellors who had sate at the feet o' his father Solomon, and, as it was weel put by Mr. Meiklejohn in his lecture on the chapter, were doubtless partakers of his sapience. But I maun hear naething about honour; we ken naething here but about credit. Honour is a homicide and a bloodspiller, that gangs about making frays in the street; but Credit is a decent honest man, that sits at hame and makes the pat play.'

¹ See Boys' Snow-Balling. Note L.

'Assuredly, Mr. Jarvie,' said our friend Owen, 'credit is the sum total; and if we can but save that, at whatever discount——'

'Ye are right, Mr. Owen — ye are right; ye speak weel and wisely; and I trust bowls will row right though they are a wee ajee e'enow. But touching Robin, I am of opinion he will befriend this young man if it is in his power. He has a gude heart, puir Robin; and though I lost a matter o' twa hunder pounds wi' his former engagements, and haena muckle expectation ever to see back my thousand pund Scots that he promises me e'enow, yet I will never say but what Robin means fair by a' men.'

'I am then to consider him,' I replied, 'as an honest man?'

'Umph!' replied Jarvie, with a precautionary sort of cough. 'Ay, he has a kind o' Hieland honesty; he's honest after a sort, as they say. My father the deacon used aye to laugh when he tauld me how that bye-word came up. Ane Captain Costlett was cracking crouse about his loyalty to King Charles, and Clerk Pettigrew — ye'll hae heard mony a tale about him? — asked him after what manner he served the king, when he was fighting again him at Wor'ster in Cromwell's army; and Captain Costlett was a ready body, and said that he served him *after a sort*. My honest father used to laugh weel at that sport; and sae the bye-word came up.'

'But do you think,' I said, 'that this man will be able to serve me after a sort, or should I trust myself to this place of rendezvous which he has given me?'

'Frankly and fairly, it's worth trying. Ye see yoursell there's some risk in your staying here. This bit body Morris has gotten a custom-house place down at Greenock — that's a port on the Firth down by the re; and tho' a' the warld kens him to be but a twa-leggit creature, wi' a goose's head and a hen's heart, that goes about on the quay plaguing folk about permits, and cockits, and dockits, and a' that vexations trade, yet if he lodge an information — ou, nae doubt a man in magisterial duty maun attend to it, and ye might come to be clapped up between four wa's, whilk wad be ill-convenient to your father's affairs.'

'True,' I observed; 'yet what service am I likely to render him by leaving Glasgow, which, it is probable, will be the principal scene of Rashleigh's machinations, and committing myself to the doubtful faith of a man of whom I know little but that he fears justice, and has doubtless good reasons for doing so; and that for some secret, and probably dangerous,

purpose he is in close league and alliance with the very person who is like to be the author of our ruin !'

'Ah ! but ye judge Rob hardly,' said the Bailie — 'ye judge him hardly, puir chield ; and the truth is, that ye ken naething about our hill country, or Hiellands, as we ca' them. They are clean anither set frae the like o' huz ; there's nae bailie courts amang them ; nae magistrates that dinna bear the sword in vain, like the worthy deacon that's awa', and, I may say 't, like mysell and other present magistrates in this city. But it's just the laird's command and the loon maun loup ; and the never another law hae they but the length o' their dirks : the broadsword's pursuer, or plaintiff, as you Englishers ca' it, and the target is defender ; the stoutest head bears langest out — and there's a Hielland plea for ye.'

Owen groaned deeply ; and I allow that the description did not greatly increase my desire to trust mysell in a country so lawless as he described these Scottish mountains.

'Now, sir,' said Jarvie, 'we speak little o' thae things, because they are familiar to oursells ; and where's the use o' vilifying ane's country, and bringing a discredit on ane's kin, before Southrons and strangers ? It's an ill bird that files its air nest.'

'Well, sir, but as it is no impertinent curiosity of mine, but real necessity, that obliges me to make these inquiries, I hope you will not be offended at my pressing for a little farther information. I have to deal, on my father's account, with several gentlemen of these wild countries, and I must trust your good sense and experience for the requisite lights upon the subject.'

This little morsel of flattery was not thrown out in vain.

'Experience !' said the Bailie, 'I hae had experience, nae doubt, and I hae made some calculations. Ay, and to speak quietly amang oursells, I hae made some perquisitions through Andrew Wylie, my auld clerk ; he's wi' MacVittie and Co. now, but he whiles drinks a gill on the Saturday afternoons wi' his auld master. And since ye say ye are willing to be guided by the Glasgow weaver-body's advice, I am no the man that will refuse it to the son of an auld correspondent, and my father the deacon was nane sic afore me. I have whiles thought o' letting my lights burn before the Duke of Argyle or his brother Lord Ilay — for wherefore should they be hidden under a bushel ? — but the like o' thae grit men wadna mind the like o' me, a puir wabster-body ; they think mair o' wha says a thing

than o' what the thing is that's said. The mair's the pity — mair's the pity. Not that I wad speak ony ill of this Mac-Callum More. "Curse not the rich in your bedchamber," saith the son of Sirach, for a bird of the air shall carry the clatter, and pint-stoups hae lang lugs.'

I interrupted these prolegomena, in which Mr. Jarvie was apt to be somewhat diffuse, by praying him to rely upon Mr. Owen and myself as perfectly secret and safe confidants.

'It's no for that,' he replied, 'for I fear nae man; what for suld I? I speak nae treason. Only thae Hielandmen hae lang grips, and I whiles gang a wee bit up the glens to see some auld kinsfolks, and I wadna willingly be in bad blude wi' ony o' their clans. Howsomever, to proceed — Ye maun understand I found my remarks on figures, whilk, as Mr. Owen here weel kens, is the only true demonstrable root of human knowledge.'

Owen readily assented to a proposition so much in his own way, and our orator proceeded.

'These Hielands of ours, as we ca' them, gentlemen, are but a wild kind of warld by themsells, full of heights and howes, woods, caverns, lochs, rivers, and mountains that it wad tire the very deevil's wings to flee to the tap o' them. And in this country, and in the Isles, whilk are little better, or, to speak the truth, rather waur than the mainland, there are about twa hunder and thirty parochines, including the Orkneys, where, whether they speak Gaelic or no, I wotna, but they are an uncivilised people. Now, sirs, I sall haud ilk parochine at the moderate estimate of eight hunder examinable persons, deducting children under nine years of age, and then adding one-fifth to stand for bairns of nine years auld and under, the whole population will reach to the sum of — let us add one-fifth to 800 to be the multiplier, and 230 being the multiplicand —'

'The product,' said Mr. Owen, who entered delightedly into these statistics of Mr. Jarvie, 'will be 230,000.'

'Right, sir — perfectly right; and the military array of this Hieland country, were a' the men-folk between aughteen and fifty-six brought out that could bear arms, couldna come weel short of fifty-seven thousand five hundred men. Now, sir, it's a sad and awfu' truth that there is neither wark, nor the very fashion nor appearance of wark, for the tae half of thae puir creatures; that is to say, that the agriculture, the pasturage, the fisheries, and every species of honest industry about the country, cannot employ the one moiety of the population, let

them work as lazily as they like; and they do work as if a plough or a spade burnt their fingers. Aweel, sir, this moiety of unemployed bodies, amounting to —

‘To one hundred and fifteen thousand souls,’ said Owen, ‘being the half of the above product.’

‘Ye hae’t, Maister Owen — ye hae’t; whereof there may be twenty-eight thousand seven hundred able-bodied gillies fit to bear arms, and that do bear arms, and will touch or look at nae honest means of livelihood even if they could get it — which, lack-a-day, they cannot.’

‘But is it possible,’ said I, ‘Mr. Jarvie, that this can be a just picture of so large a portion of the island of Britain?’

‘Sir, I’ll make it as plain as Peter Pasley’s pike-staff; I will allow that ilk parochine, on an average, employs fifty pleughs, whilk is a great proportion in sic miserable soil as thae creatures hae to labour, and that there may be pasture enough for pleugh-horses, and owsen, and forty or fifty cows; now, to take care o’ the pleughs and cattle, we’ll allow seventy-five families of six lives in ilk family, and we’ll add fifty mair to make even numbers, and ye hae five hundred souls, the tae half o’ the population, employed and maintained in a sort o’ fashion, wi’ some chance of sour-milk and crowdie; but I wad be glad to ken what the other five hunder are to do?’

‘In the name of God!’ said I, ‘what *do* they do, Mr. Jarvie? It makes me shudder to think of their situation.’

‘Sir,’ replied the Bailie, ‘ye wad maybe shudder mair if ye were living near-hand them. For, admitting that the tae half of them may make some little thing for themsells honestly in the Lowlands by shearing in harst, droving, hay-making, and the like; ye hae still mony hundreds and thousands o’ lang-legged Hieland gillies that will neither work nor want, and maun gang thigging and sorning about on their acquaintance, or live by doing the laird’s bidding, be’t right or be’t wrang. And mair especially mony hundreds o’ them come down to the borders of the low country, where there’s gear to grip, and live by stealing, reiving, lifting cows, and the like depredations; a thing deplorable in ony Christian country, the mair especially that they take pride in it, and reckon driving a spreagh — whilk is, in plain Scotch, stealing a herd of nowt — a gallant, manly action, and mair befitting of pretty men, as sic reivers will ca’ themsells, than to win a day’s wage by ony honest thrift. And the lairds are as bad as the loons; for if they dinna bid them gae reive and harry, the deil a bit

they forbid them, and they shelter them, or let them shelter themselfs, in their woods, and mountains, and strongholds, whenever the thing's done. And every ane o' them will maintain as mony o' his ain name, or his clan, as we say, as he can rap and rend means for, or — whilk's the same thing — as mony as can in any fashion, fair or foul, mainteen themselfs; and there they are wi' gun and pistol, dirk and dourlach, ready to disturb the peace o' the country whenever the laird likes; and that's the grievance of the Highlands, whilk are, and hae been for this thousand years bye-past, a birk o' the maist lawless unchristian limmers that ever disturbed a douce, quiet, God-fearing neighbourhood like this o' ours in the west here.'

'And this kinsman of yours, and friend of mine, is he one of those great proprietors who maintain the household troops you speak of?' I inquired.

'Na, na,' said Bailie Jarvie; 'he's nane o' your great grandees o' chiefs, as they ca' them, neither; though he is weel born, and lineally descended frae auld Glenstrae. I ken his lineage: indeed he is a near kinsman, and, as I said, of gude gentle Hieland blude, though ye may think weel that I care little about that nonsense; it's a' moonshine in water — waste threads and thrums, as we say; but I could show ye letters frae his father, that was the third aff Glenstrae, to my father Deacon Jarvie — peace be wi' his memory! — beginning, "Dear Deacon," and ending, "Your loving kinsman to command." They are amais a' about borrowed siller, sae the gude deacon, that's dead and gane, keepit them as documents and evidents. He was a carefu' man.'

'But if he is not,' I resumed, 'one of their chiefs or patriarchal leaders, whom I have heard my father talk of, this kinsman of yours has, at least, much to say in the Highlands, I presume?'

'Ye may say that; nae name better kend between the Lennox and Breadalbane. Robin was anes a weel-doing, pains-taking drover, as ye wad see amang ten thousand. It was a pleasure to see him in his belted plaid and brogues, wi' his target at his back, and claymore and dirk at his belt, following a hundred Highland stots, and a dozen o' the gillies, as rough and ragged as the beasts they drave. And he was baith civil and just in his dealings, and if he thought his chapman had made a hard bargain he wad gie him a luck-penny to the mends. I hae kend him gie back five shillings out o' the pund sterling.'

'Twenty-five per cent,' said Owen, 'a heavy discount.'

'He wad gie it though, sir, as I tell ye, mair especially if

he thought the buyer was a pair man, and couldna st ad by a loan. But the times cam hard, and Rob was ventur some. It wassa my faut — it wassa my faut ; he canna wyte me. I aye tauld him o't. And the creditors, mair especially some grit neighbours o' his, grippit to his living and land ; and they say his wife was turned out o' the house to the hillside, and sair misguided to the boot. Shamefu' ! shamefu' ! I am a peacefu' man and a magistrate, but if ony one had guided sae muckle as my servant quean, Mattie, as it's like they guided Rob's wife, I think it wuld hae set the shabble that my father the deacon had at Bothwell Brig a-walking again. Weel, Rob cam hame, and fand desolation, God pity us ! where he left plenty ; he looked east, west, south, north, and saw neither hauld nor hope — neither heild nor shelter ; sae he e'en wu'd the bonnet ower his brow, belted the broadsword to his side, took to the brae-side, and became a broken man.'

The voice of the good citizen was broken by his contending feelings. He obviously, while he professed to condemn the pedigree of his Highland kinsman, attached a secret feeling of consequence to the connexion, and he spoke of his friend in his prosperity with an overflow of affection which deepened his sympathy for his misfortunes and his regret for their consequences.

'Thus tempted, and urged by despair,' said I, seeing Mr. Jarvie did not proceed in his narrative, 'I suppose your kinsman became one of those depredators you have described to us ?'

'No sae bad as that,' said the Glaswegian — 'no a'thegither and outwaght sae bad as that ; but he became a levier of black-mail, wider and farther than ever it was raised in our day, a' through the Lennox and Menteith, and up to the gates o' Stirling Castle.'

'Black-mail ? I do not understand the phrase,' I remarked.

'Ou, ye see, Rob soon gathered an unco band o' blue-bonnets at his back, for he comes o' a rough name when he's kent by his ain, and a name that's held its ain for mony a lang year, baith again king and parliament, and kirk too for aught I ken — an auld and honourable name, for as sair as it has been worried and hadden down and oppressed. My mother was a MacGregor, I carena wha kens it. And sae Rob had soon a gallant band ; and as it grieved him, he said, to see sic "hershup," and waste, and depredation to the south o' the Hieland line, why, if ony heritor or farmer wad pay him four pounds Scots out of each hundred pounds of valued rent, whilk was doubtless a moderate consideration, Rob engaged to keep them

scathless; let them send to him if they lost aye muckle as a single cloot by thieving, and Rob engaged to get them again, or pay the value; and he aye keepit his word — I canna deny but he keepit his word — a' men allow Rob keeps his word.'

'This is a very singular contract of assurance,' said Mr. Owen.

'It's clean again our statute law, that must be owned,' said Jarvie — 'clean again law, the levying and the paying black-mail are baith punishable; but if the law canna protect my barn and byre, what for suld I no engage wi' a Hieland gentleman that can? answer me that.'

'But,' said I, 'Mr. Jarvie, is this contract of black-mail, as you call it, completely voluntary on the part of the landlord or farmer who pays the insurance? or what usually happens in case any one refuses payment of this tribute?'

'Aha, lad!' said the Bailie, laughing and putting his finger to his nose, 'ye think ye hae me there. Troth, I wad advise ony friends o' mine to gree wi' Rob; for, watch as they like, and do what they like, they are sair apt to be harried when the lang nights come on. Some o' the Grahame and Cohoon gentry stood out; but what then? they lost their haill stock the first winter; sae maist folks now think it best to come into Rob's terms. He's easy wi' a' body that will be easy wi' him; but if ye thraw him ye had better thraw the deevil.'

'And by his exploits in these vocations,' I continued, 'I suppose he has rendered himself amenable to the laws of the country?'

'Amenable? ye may say that; his craig wad ken the weight o' his hurdies if they could get hand o' Rob. But he has gude friends amang the grit folks; and I could tell ye o' ae grit family that keeps him up as far as they decently can, to be a thorn in the side of another. And then he's sic an auld-farran lang-headed chield as never took up the trade o' cateran in our time: mony a daft reik he has played, mair than wad fill a book, and a queer ane it wad be, as gude as Robin Hood or William Wallace — a' fu' o' venturesome deeds and escapes, sic as folk tell ower at a winter-ingle in the daft days. It's a queer thing o' me, gentlemen, that am a man o' pence mysell, and a peacefu' man's son, for the deacon my father quarrelled wi' nane out o' the town-council — it's a queer thing, I say, but I think the Hieland blude o' me warms at thae daft tales, and whiles I like better to hear them than a word o' profit, Gude forgie me! But they are vanities — sinfu'

vanities; and, moreover, again the statute law — again the statute and gospel law.'

I now followed up my investigation by inquiring what means of influence this Mr. Robert Campbell could possibly possess over my affairs or those of my father.

'Why, ye are to understand,' said Mr. Jarvie, in a very subdued tone — 'I speak amang friends, and under the rose — ye are to understand that the Hielands hae been keepit quiet since the year aughty-nine, that was Killiecrankie year. But how hae they been keepit quiet, think ye? By siller, Mr. Owen; by siller, Mr. Osbaldistone. King William caused Breadalbane distribute twenty thousand gude pund sterling amang them, and it's said the auld Hieland Earl keepit a lang lug o't in his ain sporran. And then Queen Anne, that's dead, gae the chiefs bits o' pensions, sae they had wherewith to support their gillies and caterans that work nae wark, as I said afore; and they lay by quiet eneugh, saving some spreagherie on the Lowlands, whilk is their use and wont, and some cutting o' thrapples amang themsells, that nae civilised body kens or cares ony thing anent. Weel, but there's a new warld come up wi' this King George — I say, God bless him, for ane! — there's neither like to be siller nor pensions gaun amang them; they haena the means n' mainteening the clans that eat them up, as ye may guess frae what I said before; their credit's gane in the Lowlands; and a man that can whistle ye up a thousand or feifteen hundred linking lads to do his will wad hardly get fifty pund on his band at the Cross o' Glasgow. This canna stand lang; there will be an outbreak for the Stuarts — there will be an outbreak; they will come down on the Low Country like a flood, as they did in the waefu' wars o' Montrose, and that will be seen and heard tell o' ere a twalmonth gangs round.'

'Yet still,' I said, 'I do not see how this concerns Mr. Campbell, much less my father's affairs.'

'Rob can levy five hundred men, sir, and therefore war suld concern him as muckle as maist folk,' replied the Bailie; 'for it is a faculty that is far less profitable in time o' peace. Then, to tell ye the truth, I doubt he has been the prime agent between some o' our Hieland chiefs and the gentlemen in the north o' England. We a' heard o' the public money that was taen frae the chield Morris somewhere about the fit o' Cheviot by Rob and ane o' the Osbaldistone lads; and, to tell ye the truth, word gaed that it was yoursell, Mr. Francis, and sorry was I that your father's son suld hae taen to sic practices. Na,

ye needna say a word about it, I see weel I was mistaen; but I wad believe ony thing o' a stage-player, whilk I concluded ye to be. But now I doubtna it has been Rashleigh himsell, or some other o' your cousins; they are a' tarr'd wi' the same stick — rank Jacobites and Papists — and wad think the government siller and government papers lawfu' prize. And the creature Morris is sic a cowardly caitiff that to this hour he daurna say that it was Rob took the portmanteau aff him; and throth he's right, for your custom-house and excise cattle are ill liket on a' sides, and Rob might get a back-handed lick at him before the Board, as they ca't, could help him.'

'I have long suspected this, Mr. Jarvie,' said I, 'and perfectly agree with you; but as to my father's affairs —'

'Suspected it? it's certain — it's certain; I ken them that saw some of the papers that were taen aff Morris, it's needless to say where. But to your father's affairs. Ye maun think that in thae twenty years bye-gane some o' the Hieland lairds and chiefs hae come to some sma' sense o' their ain interest. Your father and others hae bought the woods of Glen Disseries, Glen Kissoch, Tober-na-Kippoch, and mony mair besides, and your father's house has granted large bills in payment; and as the credit o' Osbaldistone and Tresham was gude — for I'll say before Mr. Owen's face, as I wad behind his back, that, bating misfortunes o' the Lord's sending, nae men could be mair honourable in business — the Hieland gentlemen, holders o' thae bills, hae found credit in Glasgow and Edinburgh — I might amaist say in Glasgow wholly, for it's little the pridefu' Edinburgh folk do in real business — for all, or the greater part o' the contents o' thae bills. So that — Aha! d'ye see me now?'

I confessed I could not quite follow his drift.

'Why,' said he, 'if these bills are not paid, the Glasgow merchant comes on the Hieland lairds, whae hae deil a boddle o' siller, and will like ill to spew up what is item a' spent. They will turn desperate, five hundred will rise that might hae sitten at hame, the deil will gae ower Jock Wabster, and the stopping of your father's house will hasten the outbreak that's been sae lang biding us.'

'You think, then,' said I, surprised at this singular view of the case, 'that Rashleigh Osbaldistone has done this injury to my father merely to accelerate a rising in the Highlands, by distressing the gentlemen to whom these bills were originally granted?'

'Doubtless — doubtless; it has been one main reason, Mr.

Osbaldistone. I doubtna but what the ready money he carried off wi' him might be another. But that makes comparatively but a sma' part o' your father's loss, though it might make the maist part o' Rashleigh's direct gain. The assets he carried off are of nae mair use to him than if he were to light his pipe wi' them. He tried if MacVittie and Co. wad gie him siller on them, that I ken by Andro Wylie; but they were ower auld cats to draw that strae afore them: they keepit aff and gae fair words. Rashleigh Osbaldistone is better kend than trusted in Glasgow, for he was here about some Jacobitical papistical trok ing in seventeen hundred and seven, and left debt ahint him. Na, na, he canna pit aff the paper here; folk will misdoubt him how he came by it. Na, na, he'll hae the stuff safe at some o' their haulds in the Hielands, and I daur say my cousin Rob could get at it gin he liked.'

'But would he be disposed to serve us in this pinch, Mr. Jarvie?' said I. 'You have described him as an agent of the Jacobite party, and deeply connected in their intrigues; will he be disposed for my sake, or, if you please, for the sake of justice, to make an act of restitution which, supposing it in his power, would, according to your view of the case, materially interfere with their plans?'

'I canna preceesely speak to that: the grandees among them are doubtfu' o' Rob, and he's doubtfu' o' them; and he's been weel friended wi' the Argyle family, wha stand for the present model of government. If he was freed o' his hornings and captions, he wad rather be on Argyle's side than he wad be on Breadalbane's, for there's auld ill-will between the Breadalbane family and his kin and name. The truth is, that Rob is for his ain hand, as Henry Wynd feught:¹ he'll take the side that suits him best; if the deil was laird, Rob wad be for being tenant, and ye canna blame him, puir fallow, considering his circumstances. But there's ae thing sair again ye: Rob has a grey mear in his stable at hame.'

'A grey mare!' said I. 'What is that to the purpose?'

'The wife, man—the wife, an awfu' wife she is. She downa bide the sight o' a kindly Scot, if he come frae the Lowlands, far less of an Inglisher, and she'll be keen for a' that can set up King James and ding down King George.'

'It is very singular,' I replied, 'that the mercantile transactions of London citizens should become involved with revolutions and rebellions.'

¹ See To fight like Henry Wynd. Note 8.

'Not at a', man — not at a', returned Mr. Jarvie, 'that's a' your silly prejudications. I read whiles in the lang dark nights, and I hae read in Baker's *Chronicle* that the merchants o' London could gar the Bank of Genoa break their promise to advance a mighty sum to the King of Spain, whereby the sailing of the Grand Spanish Armada was put aff for a haill year. What think you of that, sir?'

'That the merchants did their country golden service, which ought to be honourably remembered in our histories.'

'I think sae too; and they wad do weel, and deserve weel baith o' the state and o' humanity, that wad save three or four honest Hieland gentlemen frae louping heads ower heels into destruction, wi' a' their puir sackless followers, just because they canna pay back the siller they had reason to count upon as their ain, and save your father's credit, and my ain gude siller that Osbaldistone and Tresham awes me into the bargain. I say, if ane could manage a' this, I think it suld be done and said unto him, even if he were a puir ca'-the-shuttle body, as unto one whom the king delighteth to honour.'

'I cannot pretend to estimate the extent of public gratitude,' I replied; 'but our own thankfulness, Mr. Jarvie, would be commensurate with the extent of the obligation.'

'Which,' added Mr. Owen, 'we would endeavour to balance with a *per contra* the instant our Mr. Osbaldistone returns from Holland.'

'I doubtna — I doubtna; he is a very worthy gentleman, and a sponseible, and wi' some o' my lights might do muckle business in Scotland. Weel, sir, if these assets could be redeemed out o' the hands o' the Philistines, they are gude paper: they are the right stuff when they are in the right hands, and that's yours, Mr. Owen. And I se find ye three men in Glasgow, for as little as ye may think o' us, Mr. Owen — that's Sandie Steenson in the Trade's Land, and John Pirie in Candle Riggs, and another, that sall be nameless at this present, sa' advance what soums are sufficient to secure the credit of your house, and seek nae better security.'

Owen's eyes sparkled at this prospect of extrication; but his countenance instantly fell on recollecting how improbable it was that the recovery of the assets, as he technically called them, should be successfully achieved.

'Dinna despair, sir — dinna despair,' said Mr. Jarvie; 'I hae taen sae muckle concern wi' your affairs already that it maun

e'en be ower shoorn ower boots wi' me now. I am just like my father the deacon — praise be wi' him! — I canna meddle wi' a friend's business but I aye end wi' making it my ain. Sae I'll e'en pit on my boots the morn and be jogging ower Drymen Muir wi' Mr. Frank here; and if I canna mak Rob hear reason, and his wife too, I dinna ken wha can. I hae been a kind freend to them afore now, to say naething o' ower-looking him last night, when naming his name wad hae cost him his life. I'll be hearing o' this in the council maybe frae Bailie Grahame and MacVittie and some o' them. They hae coost up my kindred to Rob tō me already, set up their nashgabs! I tauld them I wad vindicate nae man's faults; but set apart what he had done again the law o' the country, and the hership o' the Lennox, and the misfortune o' some folk losing life by him, he was an honest man than stude on ony o' their shanks. And what for suld I mind their clavers? If Rob is an outlaw, to himsell be it said, there is nae laws now about reset of intercommuned persons, as there was in the ill times o' the last Stuarts. I trow I hae a Scotch tongue in my head; if they speak, I'se answer.'

It was with great pleasure that I saw the Bailie gradually surmount the barriers of caution, under the united influence of public spirit and good-natured interest in our affairs, together with his natural wish to avoid loss and acquire gain, and not a little harmless vanity. Through the combined operation of these motives he at length arrived at the doughty resolution of taking the field in person, to aid in the recovery of my father's property. His whole information led me to believe that, if the papers were in possession of this Highland adventurer, it might be possible to induce him to surrender what he could not keep with any prospect of personal advantage; and I was conscious that the presence of his kinsman was likely to have considerable weight with him. I therefore cheerfully acquiesced in Mr. Jarvie's proposal that we should set out early next morning.

That honest gentleman was indeed as vivacious and alert in preparing to carry his purpose into execution as he had been slow and cautious in forming it. He roared to Mattie to 'air his trot-cosey, to have his jack-boots greased and set before the kitchen fire all night, and to see that his beast be corned, and a' his riding gear in order.' Having agreed to meet him at five o'clock next morning, and having settled that Owen, whose presence could be of no use to us upon this expedition, should

await our return at Glasgow, we took a kind farewell of this unexpectedly zealous friend. I installed Owen in an apartment in my lodgings contiguous to my own, and, giving orders to Andrew Fairservice to attend me next morning at the hour appointed, I retired to rest with better hopes than it had lately been my fortune to entertain.

CHAPTER XXVII

Far as the eye could reach no tree was seen,
Earth, clad in russet, scorn'd the 'ly green ;
No birds, except as birds of passage, flew ;
No bee was heard to hum, no dove to coo ;
No streams, as amber smooth, as amber clear,
Were seen to glide, or heard to warble here.

Prophecy of Famine.

IT was in the bracing atmosphere of a harvest morning that I met by appointment Fairservice, with the horses, at the door of Mr. Jarvie's house, which was but little space distant from Mrs. Flyter's hotel. The first matter which caught my attention was that, whatever were the deficiencies of the pony which Mr. Fairservice's legal adviser, Clerk Touthope, generously bestowed upon him in exchange for Thorncliff's mare, he had contrived to part with it and procure in its stead an animal with so curious and complete a lameness that it seemed only to make use of three legs for the purpose of progression, while the fourth appeared as if meant to be flourished in the air by way of accompaniment. 'What do you mean by bringing such a creature as that here, sir? and where is the pony you rode to Glasgow upon?' were my very natural and impatient inquiries.

'I sell't it, sir. It was a slink beast, and wad hae eaten its head aff, standing at Luckie Flyter's at livery. And I hae bought this on your honour's account. It's a grand bargain, cost but a pund sterling the foot; that's fou a' thegither. The stringhalt will gae aff when it's gaen a mile; it's a weel-kend ganger; they ca' it Souple Tam.'

'On my soul, sir!' said I, 'you will never rest till my supple-jack and your shoulders become acquainted. If you do not go instantly and procure the other brute you shall pay the penalty of your ingenuity.'

Andrew, notwithstanding my threats, continued to battle

the point, as he said 't would coe in a guinea of rue-bargain to the man who had bought his ny before he could get it back again. Like a true Englishman, though sensible I was duped by the rascal, I was about to pay his exaction rather than lose time, when forth sallied Mr. Jarvie, cloaked, mantled, hooded, and booted as if for a Siberian winter, while two apprentices, under the immediate direction of Mattie, led forth the decent ambling steed which had the honour on such occasions to support the person of the Glasgow magistrate. Ere he 'clombe to the saddle,' an expression more descriptive of the Bailie's mode of mounting than that of the knights-errant to whom Spenser applies it, he inquired the cause of the dispute betwixt my servant and me. Having learned the nature of honest Andrew's manoeuvre, he instantly cut short all debate by pronouncing that, if Fairservice did not forthwith return the three-legged palfrey and produce the more useful quadruped which he had discarded, he would send him to prison and amerce him in half his wages. 'Mr. Osbaldistone,' said he, 'contracted for the service of both your horse and you, twa brutes at ance, ye unconscionable rascal! But I'se look weel after you during this journey.'

'It will be nonsense fining me,' said Andrew, doughtily, 'that hasna a grey groat to pay a fine wi'; it's ill taking the breeks aff a Hielandman.'

'If ye hae nae purse to fine, ye hae flesh to pine,' replied the Bailie, 'and I will look weel to ye getting your deserts the tae way or the tither.'

To the commands of Mr. Jarvie, therefore, Andrew was compelled to submit, only muttering between his teeth, 'Ower mony maisters — ower mony maisters, as the paddock said to the harrow, when every tooth gae her a tig.'

Apparently he found no difficulty in getting rid of Supple Tam, and recovering possession of his former Bucephalus, for he accomplished the exchange without being many minutes absent; nor did I hear further of his having paid any smart-money for breach of bargain.

We now set forward, but had not reached the top of the street in which Mr. Jarvie dwelt when a loud hallooing and breathless call of 'Stop, stop!' was heard behind us. We stopped accordingly, and were overtaken by Mr. Jarvie's two lads, who bore two parting tokens of Mattie's care for her master. The first was conveyed in the form of a voluminous silk handkerchief, like the mainsail of one of his own West-

Indiamen, which Mrs. Mattie particularly desired he would put about his neck, and which, thus entreated, he added to his other integuments. The second youngster brought only a verbal charge (I thought I saw the rogue disposed to laugh as he delivered it) on the part of the housekeeper, that her master would take care of the waters. 'Pooh! pooh! silly hussy,' answered Mr. Jarvie; but added, turning to me, 'it shows a kind heart though — it shows a kind heart in sae young a quean. Mattie's a carefu' lass.' So speaking, he pricked the sides of his palfrey, and we left the town without farther interruption.

While we paced easily forward, by a road which conducted us north-eastward from the town, I had an opportunity to estimate and admire the good qualities of my new friend. Although, like my father, he considered commercial transactions the most important objects of human life, he was not wedded to them so as to undervalue more general knowledge. On the contrary, with much oddity and vulgarity of manner, with a vanity which he made much more ridiculous by disguising it now and then under a thin veil of humility, and devoid as he was of all the advantages of a learned education, Mr. Jarvie's conversation showed tokens of a shrewd, observing, liberal, and, to the extent of its opportunities, a well-improved mind. He was a good local antiquary, and entertained me, as we passed along, with an account of remarkable events which had formerly taken place in the scenes through which we passed. And as he was well acquainted with the ancient history of his district, he saw with the prospective eye of an enlightened patriot the buds of many of those future advantages which have only blossomed and ripened within these few years. I remarked also, and with great pleasure, that, although a keen Scotchman, and abundantly zealous for the honour of his country, he was disposed to think liberally of the sister kingdom. When Andrew Fairservice (whom, by the way, the Bailie could not abide) chose to impute the accident of one of the horses casting his shoe to the deteriorating influence of the Union, he incurred a severe rebuke from Mr. Jarvie.

'Whisht, sir! whisht! it's ill-scraped tongues like yours that make mischief atween neighbourhoods and nations. There's naething sae gude on this side o' time but it might hae been better, and that may be said o' the Union. Nane were keener against it than the Glasgow folk, wi' their rabblings and their risings, and their mobs, as they ca' them nowadays. But it's an ill wind blows naebody gude. Let ilka ane roose

the ford as they find it. I say, "Let Glasgow flourish!" whilk is judiciously and elegantly putten round the town's arms by way of bye-word. Now, since St. Mungo catched herrings in the Clyde, what was ever like to gar us flourish like the sugar and tobacco trade? Will ony body tell me that, and grumble at the treaty that opened us a road west-awa' yonder?'

Andrew Fairservice was far from acquiescing in these arguments of expedience, and even ventured to enter a grumbling protest, 'That it was an unco change to hae Scotland's laws made in England; and that, for his share, he wadna for a' the herring-barrels in Glasgow, and a' the tobacco-casks to boot, hae gien up the riding o' the Scots Parliament, or sent awa' our crown, and our sword, and our sceptre, and Mons Meg,¹ to be keepit by thae English pock-puddings in the Tower o' Lunnon. What wad Sir William Wallace, or auld Davie Lindsay, hae said to the Union, or them that made it?'

The road which we travelled, while diverting the way with these discussions, had become wild and open as soon as we had left Glasgow a mile or two behind us, and was growing more dreary as we advanced. Huge continuous heaths spread before, behind, and around us in hopeless barrenness, now level and interspersed with swamps, green with treacherous verdure, or sable with turf, or, as they call them in Scotland, peat-bogs, and now swelling into huge heavy ascents, which wanted the dignity and form of hills, while they were still more toilsome to the passenger. There were neither trees nor bushes to relieve the eye from the russet livery of absolute sterility. The very heath was of that stunted imperfect kind which has little or no flower, and affords the coarsest and meanest covering which, as far as my experience enables me to judge, mother Earth is ever arrayed in. Living thing we saw none, except occasionally a few straggling sheep of a strange diversity of colours, as black, bluish, and orange. The sable hue predominated, however, in their faces and legs. The very birds seemed to shun these wastes, and no wonder, since they had an easy method of escaping from them; at least I only heard the monotonous and plaintive cries of the lapwing and curlew, which my companions denominated the peasweep and whaup.

At dinner, however, which we took about noon, at a most miserable ale-house, we had the good fortune to find that these tiresome screamers of the morass were not the only inhabitants of the moors. The goodwife told us that 'the gudeman had

¹ See Note 9.

been at the hill'; and well for us that he had been so, for we enjoyed the produce of his *chance* in the shape of some broiled moor-game, a dish which gallantly eked out the ewe-milk cheese, dried salmon, and outen bread, being all besides that the house afforded. Some very indifferent two-penny ale and a glass of excellent brandy crowned our repast; and as our horses had in the meantime discussed their corn, we resumed our journey with renovated vigour.

I had need of all the spirits a good dinner could give to resist the dejection which crept insensibly on my mind when I combined the strange uncertainty of my errand with the disconsolate aspect of the country through which it was leading me. Our road continued to be, if possible, more waste and wild than that we had travelled in the forenoon. The few miserable hovels that showed some marks of human habitation were now of still rarer occurrence; and at length, as we began to ascend an uninterrupted swell of moorland, they totally disappeared. The only exercise which my imagination received was when some particular turn of the road gave us a partial view to the left of a large assemblage of dark-blue mountains stretching to the north and north-west, which promised to include within their recesses a country as wild perhaps, but certainly differing greatly in point of interest from that which we now travelled. The peaks of this screen of mountains were as wildly varied and distinguished as the hills which we had seen on the right were tame and lumpish; and while I gazed on this Alpine region I felt a longing to explore its recesses, though accompanied with toil and danger similar to that which a sailor feels when he wishes for the risks and animation of a battle or a gale, in exchange for the insupportable monotony of a protracted calm. I made various inquiries of my friend, Mr. Jarvie, respecting the names and positions of these remarkable mountains; but it was a subject on which he had no information, or did not choose to be communicative. 'They're the Hieland hills—the Hieland hills. Ye'll see and hear enough about them before ye see Glasgow Cross again. I downa look at them; I never see them but they gar me grew. It's no for fear—no for fear, but just for grief for the puir blinded half-starved creatures that inhabit them. But say nae mair about it; it's ill speaking o' Hielandmen sae near the line. I hae kend mony an honest man wadna hae ventured this length without he had made his last will and testament. Mattie had a will to see me set awa on this ride, and grat a wee, the silly

tawpie; but it's nae mair ferlie to see a woman greet than to see a goose gang barefit.'

I next attempted to lead the discourse on the character and history of the person whom we were going to visit; but on this topic Mr. Jarvie was totally inaccessible, owing perhaps in part to the attendance of Mr. Andrew Fairservice, who chose to keep so close in our rear that his ears could not fail to catch every word which was spoken, while his tongue assumed the freedom of mingling in our conversation as often as he saw an opportunity. For this he occasionally incurred Mr. Jarvie's reproof.

'Keep back, sir, as best sets ye,' said the Bailie, as Andrew pressed forward to catch the answer to some question I had asked about Campbell. 'Ye wad fain ride the fore-horse, an ye wist how. That chield's aye for being out o' the cheese-fat he was moulded in. Now, as for your questions, Mr. Osbaldistone, now that chield's out o' ear-shot, I'll just tell ye it's free to you to speer, and it's free to me to answer or no. Gude, I canna say muckle o' Rob, puir chield; ill I winna say o' him, for, forby that he's my cousin, we're coming near his ain country, and there may be ane o' his gillies ahint every whin-bush for what I ken. And if ye'll be guided by my advice, the less ye speak about him, or where we are gaun, or what we are gaun to do, we'll be the mair likely to speed us in our errand. For it's like we may fa' in wi' some o' his unfreends, there are e'en ower mony o' them about; and his bonnet sits even on his brow yet for a' that; but I doubt they'll be upsides wi' Rob at the last: air day or late day, the fox's hide finds aye the slaying knife.'

'I will certainly,' I replied, 'be entirely guided by your experience.'

'Right, Mr. Osbaldistone — right; but I maun speak to this gabbling skyte too, for bairns and fules speak at the Cross what they hear at the ingle side. D' ye hear, you, Andrew — what's your name — Fairservice!'

Andrew, who at the last rebuff had fallen a good way behind, did not choose to acknowledge the summons.

'Andrew, ye scoundrel!' repeated Mr. Jarvie; 'here, sir! here!'

'Here is for the dog,' said Andrew, coming up sulkily.

'I'll gie you dog's wages, ye rascal, if ye dinna attend to what I say t' ye. We are gaun into the Hielands a bit —'

'I judged as muckle,' said Andrew.

'Haud your peace, ye knave, and hear what I have to say till ye. We are gaun a bit into the Hiellands——'

'Ye tauld me sae already,' replied the incorrigible Andrew.

'I'll break your head,' said the Bailie, rising in wrath, 'if ye dinna haud your tongue.'

'A hadden tongue,' replied Andrew, 'makes a slabbered mouth.'

It was now necessary I should interfere, which I did by commanding Andrew with an authoritative tone to be silent at his peril.

'I am silent,' said Andrew. 'I'll do a' your lawfu' bidding without a nay-say. My puir mither used aye to tell me,

Be it better, be it worse,
Be ruled by him that has the purse.

Sae ye may e'en speak as lang as ye like, baith the tane and the tither o' you, for Andrew.'

Mr. Jarvie took the advantage of his stopping after quoting the above proverb to give him the requisite instructions.

'Now, sir, it's as muckle as your life's worth — that wad be dear o' little siller, to be sure — but it is as muckle as a' our lives are worth, if ye dinna mind what I say to ye. In this public whar we are gaun to, and whar it is like we may hae to stay a' night, men o' a' clans and kindred, Hielland and Lawland, tak up their quarters. And whiles there are mair drawn dirks than open Bibles amang them, when the usquebaugh gets uppermost. See ye neither meddle nor mak, nor gie nae offence wi' that clattering tongue o' yours, but keep a calm sough, and let ilka cock fight his ain battle.'

'Muckle needs to tell me that,' said Andrew, contemptuously, 'as if I had never seen a Hiellandman before, and kend nae how to manage them. Nae man alive can cuittle up Donald better than mysell; I hae bought wi' them, sauld wi' them, eaten wi' them, drucken wi' them——'

'Did ye ever fight wi' them?' said Mr. Jarvie.

'Na, na,' answered Andrew, 'I took care o' that; it wad ill hae set me, that am an artist and half a scholar to my trade, to be fighting amang a wheen kilted loons that dinna ken the name o' a single herb or flower in braid Scots, let abee in the Latin tongue.'

'Then,' said Mr. Jarvie, 'as ye wad keep either your tongue in your mouth, or your lugs in your head — and ye might miss them, for as saucy members as they are — I charge ye to say

nae word, gude or bad, that ye can weel get bye, to ony body that may be in the clachan. And ye'll specially understand that ye're no to be bleezing and blasting about your master's name and mine, or saying that this is Mr. Bailie Nicol Jarvie o' the Saut Market, son o' the worthy Deacon Nicol Jarvie, that a'budy has heard about; and this is Mr. Frank Osbaldistone, son of the managing partner of the great house of Osbaldistone and Tresham, in the City.'

'Enough said,' answered Andrew -- 'enough said! What need ye think I wad be speaking about your names for? I hae mony things o' mair importance to speak about, I trow.'

'It's thae very things of importance that I am feared for, ye blethering goose; ye maunna speak ony thing, gude or bad, that ye can by ony possibility help.'

'If ye dinna think me fit,' replied Andrew, in a huff, 'to speak like ither folk, gie me my wages and my board-wages and I'll gae back to Glasgow. There's sma' sorrow at our parting, as the auld mear said to the broken cart.'

Finding Andrew's perverseness again rising to a point which threatened to occasion me inconvenience, I was under the necessity of explaining to him that he might return if he thought proper, but that in that case I would not pay him a single farthing for his past services. The argument *ad crumenam*, as it has been called by jocular logicians, has weight with the greater part of mankind, and Andrew was in that particular far from affecting any trick of singularity. He 'drew in his horns,' to use the Bailie's phrase, on the instant, professed no intention whatever to disoblige, and a resolution to be guided by my commands, whatever they might be.

Concord being thus happily restored to our small party, we continued to pursue our journey. The road, which had ascended for six or seven English miles, began now to descend for about the same space, through a country which, neither in fertility or interest, could boast any advantage over that which we had passed already, and which afforded no variety, unless when some tremendous peak of a Highland mountain appeared at a distance. We continued, however, to ride on without pause; and even when night fell and overshadowed the desolate wilds which we traversed, we were, as I understood from Mr. Jarvie, still three miles and a bittock distant from the place where we were to spend the night.

CHAPTER XXVIII

Baron of Bucklivie,
May the foul fiend drive ye,
And a' to pieces rive ye,
For building sic a town,

Where there's neither horse meat, nor man's meat, nor a chair to sit down.

Scottish Popular Rhymes on a Bad Inn.

THE night was pleasant, and the moon afforded us good light for our journey. Under her rays the ground over which we passed assumed a more interesting appearance than during the broad daylight, which discovered the extent of its wasteness. The mingled light and shadows gave it an interest which naturally did not belong to it; and, like the effect of a veil flung over a plain woman, irritated our curiosity on a subject which had in itself nothing gratifying.

The descent, however, still continued, turned, winded, left the more open heaths, and got into steeper ravines, which promised soon to lead us to the banks of some brook or river, and ultimately made good their presage. We found ourselves at length on the bank of a stream which rather resembled one of my native English rivers than those I had hitherto seen in Scotland. It was narrow, deep, still, and silent; although the imperfect light, as it gleamed on its placid waters, showed also that we were now among the lofty mountains which formed its cradle. 'That's the Forth,' said the Bailie, with an air of reverence which I have observed the Scotch usually pay to their distinguished rivers. The Clyde, the Tweed, the Forth, the Spey are usually named by those who dwell on their banks with a sort of respect and pride, and I have known duels occasioned by any word of disparagement. I cannot say I have the least quarrel with this sort of harmless enthusiasm. I received my friend's communication with the importance which he seemed to think appertained to it. In fact, I was not a little pleased, after so long and dull a journey, to

approach a region which promised to engage the imagination. My faithful squire, Andrew, did not seem to be quite of the same opinion, for he received the solemn information, 'That is the Forth,' with a 'Umph! an he had said that 's the public-house it wad hae been mair to the purpose.'

The Forth, however, as far as the imperfect light permitted me to judge, seemed to merit the admiration of those who claimed an interest in its stream. A beautiful eminence of the most regular round shape, and clothed with copsewood of hazels, mountain-ash, and dwarf-oak, intermixed with a few magnificent old trees, which, rising above the underwood, exposed their forked and bared branches to the silver moonshine, seemed to protect the sources from which the river sprung. If I could trust the tale of my companion, which, while professing to disbelieve every word of it, he told under his breath, and with an air of something like intimidation, this hill, so regularly formed, so richly verdant, and garlanded with such a beautiful variety of ancient trees and thriving copsewood, was held by the neighbourhood to contain within its unseen caverns the palaces of the fairies; a race of airy beings who formed an intermediate class between men and demons, and who, if not positively malignant to humanity, were yet to be avoided and feared on account of their capricious, vindictive, and irritable disposition.¹

'They ca' them,' said Mr. Jarvie, in a whisper, '*Daoine Schie*, whilk signifies, as I understand, men of peace; meaning thereby to make their gude-will. And we may e'en as weel ca' them that too, Mr. Osbaldistone, for there's nae gude in speaking ill o' the laird within his ain bounds.' But he added presently after, on seeing one or two lights which twinkled before us, 'It's deceits o' Satan after a', and I fearna to say it; for we are near the manse now, and yonder are the lights in the Clachan of Aberfoil.'

I own I was well pleased at the circumstance to which Mr. Jarvie alluded; not so much that it set his tongue at liberty, in his opinion, with all safety to declare his real sentiments with respect to the *Daoine Schie* or fairies, as that it promised some hours' repose to ourselves and our horses, of which, after a ride of fifty miles and upwards, both stood in some need.

We crossed the infant Forth by an old-fashioned stone bridge, very high and very narrow. My conductor, however, informed me that to get through this deep and important

¹ See Fairy Superstition. Note 10.

stream, and to clear all its tributary dependencies, the general pass from the Highlands to the southward lay by what was called the Fords of Frew, at all times deep and difficult of passage, and often altogether unfordable. Beneath these fords there was no pass of general resort until so far east as the bridge of Stirling; so that the river of Forth forms a defensible line betwixt the Highlands and Lowlands of Scotland, from its source nearly to the Firth or inlet of the ocean, in which it terminates. The subsequent events which we witnessed led me to recall with attention what the shrewdness of Bailie Jarvie suggested, in his proverbial expression, that 'Forth bridles the wild Highlandman.'

About half a mile's riding after we crossed the bridge placed us at the door of the public-house where we were to pass the evening. It was a hovel rather worse than better than that in which we had dined; but its little windows were lighted up, voices were heard from within, and all intimated a prospect of food and shelter, to which we were by no means indifferent. Andrew was the first to observe that there was a peeled willow-wand placed across the half-open door of the little inn. He hung back, and advised us not to enter. 'For,' said Andrew, 'some of their chiefs and grit men are birling at the usquebaugh in bye there, and dinna want to be disturbed; and the least we'll get if we gang ram-stam in on them will be a broken head, to learn us better havings, if we dinna come by the length of a cauld dirk in our wame, whilk is just as likely.'

I looked at the Bailie, who acknowledged, in a whisper, 'that the gowk had some reason for singing at the year.'

Meantime a staring half-clad wench or two came out of the inn and the neighbouring cottages on hearing the sound of our horses' feet. No one bade us welcome, nor did any one offer to take our horses, from which we had alighted; and to our various inquiries the hopeless response of 'Ha niel Sassenach' was the only answer we could extract. The Bailie, however, found (in his experience) a way to make them speak English. 'If I gie ye a bawbee,' said he to an urchin of about ten years old, with a fragment of a tattered plaid about him, 'will you understand Sassenach?'

'Ay, ay, that will I,' replied the brat, in very decent English.

'Then gang and tell your mammy, my man, there's twa Sassenach gentlemen come to speak wi' her.'

The landlady presently appeared with a lighted piece of split fir blazing in her hand. The turpentine in this species of torch (which is generally dug from out the turf-bogs) makes it blaze and sparkle readily, so that it is often used in the Highlands in lieu of candles. On this occasion such a torch illuminated the wild and anxious features of a female, pale, thin, and rather above the usual size, whose soiled and ragged dress, though aided by a plaid or tartan screen, barely served the purposes of decency, and certainly not those of comfort. Her black hair, which escaped in uncombed elf-locks from under her coif, as well as the strange and embarrassed look with which she regarded us, gave me the idea of a witch disturbed in the midst of her unlawful rites. She plainly refused to admit us into the house. We remonstrated anxiously, and pleaded the length of our journey, the state of our horses, and the certainty that there was not another place where we could be received nearer than Callander, which the Bailie stated to be seven Scots miles distant. How many these may exactly amount to in English measurement I have never been able to ascertain, but I think the double *ratio* may be pretty safely taken as a medium computation. The obdurate hostess treated our expostulation with contempt. 'Better gang farther than fare waur,' she said, speaking the Scottish Lowland dialect, and being indeed a native of the Lennox district. 'Her house was taen up wi' them wadna like to be intruded on wi' strangers. She didna ken wha mair might be there — redcoats, it might be, frae the garrison.' These last words she spoke under her breath, and with very strong emphasis. 'The night,' she said, 'was fair abune head; a night amang the heather wad caller our bloods. We might sleep in our claes as mony a gude blade does in the scabbard; there wasna muckle flow-moss in the shaw, if we took up our quarters right; and we might pit up our horses to the hill, naebody wad say naething against it.'

'But, my good woman,' said I, while the Bailie groaned and remained undecided, 'it is six hours since we dined, and we have not taken a morsel since. I am positively dying with hunger, and I have no taste for taking up my abode supperless among these mountains of yours. I positively must enter; and make the best apology you can to your guests for adding a stranger or two to their number. Andrew, you will see the horses put up.'

The Hecate looked at me with surprise, and then ejaculated, 'A wilfu' man will hae his way: "Them that will to Cupar maun

to Cupar!" To see thae English belly-gods! He has had ae fu' meal the day already, and he'll venture life and liberty rather than he'll want a het supper! Set roasted beef and pudding on the opposite side o' the pit o' Tophet, and an Englishman will mak a spang at it. But I wash my hands o't. Follow me, sir (to Andrew), and I'll show ye where to pit the beasts.'

I own I was somewhat dismayed at my landlady's expressions, which seemed to be ominous of some approaching danger. I did not, however, choose to shrink back after having declared my resolution, and accordingly I boldly entered the house; and, after narrowly escaping breaking my shins over a turf-back and a salting-tub, which stood on either side of the narrow exterior passage, I opened a crazy half-decayed door, constructed not of plank but of wicker, and, followed by the Bailie, entered into the principal apartment of this Scottish caravansary.

The interior presented a view which seemed singular enough to southern eyes. The fire, fed with blazing turf and branches of dried wood, blazed merrily in the centre; but the smoke, having no means to escape but through a hole in the roof, eddied round the rafters of the cottage, and hung in sable folds at the height of about five feet from the floor. The space beneath was kept pretty clear by innumerable currents of air which rushed towards the fire from the broken panel of basket-work which served as a door; from two square holes, designed as ostensible windows, through one of which was thrust a plaid and through the other a tattered greatcoat; and, moreover, through various less distinguishable apertures in the walls of the tenement, which, being built of round stones and turf, cemented by mud, let in the atmosphere at innumerable crevices.

At an old oaken table adjoining to the fire sat three men, guests apparently, whom it was impossible to regard with indifference. Two were in the Highland dress; the one, a little dark-complexioned man, with a lively, quick, and irritable expression of features, wore the trews, or close pantaloons, wove out of a sort of chequered stocking stuff. The Bailie whispered me that 'he behoved to be a man of some consequence, for that naeboddy but their duinhé-wassels wore the trews; they were ill to weave exactly to their Highland pleasure.'

The other mountaineer was a very tall, strong man, with a quantity of reddish hair, freckled face, high cheek-bones, and long chin—a sort of caricature of the national features of Scotland. The tartan which he wore differed from that of his companion, as it had much more scarlet in it, whereas the

shades of black and dark green predominated in the chequers of the other. The third, who sate at the same table, was in the Lowland dress — a bold, stout-looking man, with a cast of military daring in his eye and manner, his riding-dress showily and profusely laced, and his cocked hat of formidable dimensions. His hanger and a pair of pistols lay on the table before him. Each of the Highlanders had their naked dirks stuck upright in the board beside him — an emblem, I was afterwards informed, but surely a strange one, that their computation was not to be interrupted by any brawl. A mighty pewter measure, containing about an English quart of usquebaugh, a liquor nearly as strong as brandy, which the Highlanders distil from malt and drink undiluted in excessive quantities, was placed before these worthies. A broken glass with a wooden foot served as a drinking cup to the whole party, and circulated with a rapidity which, considering the potency of the liquor, seemed absolutely marvellous. These men spoke loud and eagerly together, sometimes in Gaelic, at other times in English. Another Highlander, wrapt in his plaid, reclined on the floor, his head resting on a stone, from which it was only separated by a wisp of straw, and slept or seemed to sleep, without attending to what was going on around him. He also was probably a stranger, for he lay in full dress, and accoutred with the sword and target, the usual arms of his countrymen when on a journey. Cribs there were of different dimensions beside the walls, formed some of fractured boards, some of shattered wicker-work or plaited boughs, in which slumbered the family of the house — men, women, and children — their places of repose only concealed by the dusky wreaths of vapour which arose above, below, and around them.

Our entrance was made so quietly, and the carousers I have described were so eagerly engaged in their discussions, that we escaped their notice for a minute or two. But I observed the Highlander who lay beside the fire raise himself on his elbow as we entered, and, drawing his plaid over the lower part of his face, fix his look on us for a few seconds, after which he resumed his recumbent posture, and seemed again to betake himself to the repose which our entrance had interrupted.

We advanced to the fire, which was an agreeable spectacle after our late ride during the chillness of an autumn evening among the mountains, and first attracted the attention of the guests who had preceded us by calling for the landlady. She approached, looking doubtfully and timidly, now at us, now at

the other party, and returned a hesitating and doubtful answer to our request to have something to eat.

'She didna ken,' she said; 'she wasna sure there was ony thing in the house,' and then modified her refusal with the qualification — 'that is, ony thing fit for the like of us.'

I assured her we were indifferent to the quality of our supper; and looking round for the means of accommodation, which were not easily to be found, I arranged an old hen-coop as a seat for Mr. Jarvie, and turned down a broken tub to serve for my own. Andrew Fairservice entered presently afterwards, and took a place in silence behind our backs. The natives, as I may call them, continued staring at us with an air as if confounded by our assurance, and we, at least I myself, disguised as well as we could, under an appearance of indifference, any secret anxiety we might feel concerning the mode in which we were to be received by those whose privacy we had disturbed.

At length the lesser Highlander, addressing himself to me, said in very good English, and in a tone of great haughtiness, 'Ye make yourself at home, sir, I see.'

'I usually do so,' I replied, 'when I come into a house of public entertainment.'

'And did she na see,' said the taller man, 'by the white wand at the door, that gentlemans had taken up the public-house on their ain business?'

'I do not pretend to understand the customs of this country; but I am yet to learn,' I replied, 'how three persons should be entitled to exclude all other travellers from the only place of shelter and refreshment for miles round.'

'There's nae reason for't, gentlemen,' said the Bailie; 'we mean nae offence — but there's neither law nor reason for't. But as far as a stoup o' gude brandy wad make up the quarrel, we, being peaceable folk, wad be willing —'

'Damn your brandy, sir!' said the Lowlander, adjusting his cocked hat fiercely upon his head; 'we desire neither your brandy nor your company,' and up he rose from his seat. His companions also arose, muttering to each other, drawing up their plaids, and snorting and snuffing the air after the manner of their countrymen when working themselves into a passion.

'I tauld ye what wad come, gentlemen,' said the landlady, 'an ye wad hae been tauld. Get awa' wi' ye out o' my house, and make nae disturbance here; there's nae gentleman be disturbed at Jeanie MacAlpine's an she can hinder. A

when idle English loons, gaun about the country under cloud o' night, and disturbing honest peaceable gentlemen that are drinking their drap drink at the fireside !'

At another time I should have thought of the old Latin adage,

Dat veniam corvis, vexat censura columbas.

But I had not any time for classical quotation, for there was obviously a fray about to ensue, at which, feeling myself indignant at the inhospitable insolence with which I was treated, I was totally indifferent, unless on the Bailie's account, whose person and qualities were ill qualified for such an adventure. I started up, however, on seeing the others rise, and dropped my cloak from my shoulders, that I might be ready to stand on the defensive.

'We are three to three,' said the lesser Highlander, glancing his eyes at our party ; 'if ye be pretty men, draw !' and, unsheathing his broadsword, he advanced on me. I put myself in a posture of defence, and, aware of the superiority of my weapon, a rapier or small-sword, was little afraid of the issue of the contest. The Bailie behaved with unexpected mettle. As he saw the gigantic Highlander confront him with his weapon drawn, he tugged for a second or two at the hilt of his 'shabble,' as he called it ; but finding it loth to quit the sheath, to which it had long been secured by rust and disuse, he seized, as a substitute, on the red-hot coulter of a plough which had been employed in arranging the fire by way of a poker, and brandished it with such effect that at the first pass he set the Highlander's plaid on fire, and compelled him to keep a respectful distance till he could get it extinguished. Andrew, on the contrary, who ought to have faced the Lowland champion, had, I grieve to say it, vanished at the very commencement of the fray. But his antagonist, crying, 'Fair play ! fair play !' seemed courteously disposed to take no share in the scuffle. Thus we commenced our *rencontre* on fair terms as to numbers. My own aim was to possess myself, if possible, of my antagonist's weapon ; but I was deterred from closing for fear of the dirk which he held in his left hand, and used in parrying the thrusts of my rapier. Meantime the Bailie, notwithstanding the success of his first onset, was sorely bested. The weight of his weapon, the corpulence of his person, the very effervescence of his own passions, were rapidly exhausting both his strength and his breath,

and he was almost at the mercy of his antagonist, when up started the sleeping Highlander from the floor on which he reclined, with his naked sword and target in his hand, and threw himself between the discomfited magistrate and his assailant, exclaiming, 'Her nainsell has eaten the town bread at the Cross o' Glasgow, and py her troth she'll fight for Bailie Sharvie at the Clachan of Aberfoil, tat will she e'en!' And seconding his words with deeds, this unexpected auxiliary made his sword whistle about the ears of his tall countryman, who, nothing abashed, returned his blows with interest. But being both accoutred with round targets made of wood, studded with brass and covered with leather, with which they readily parried each other's strokes, their combat was attended with much more noise and clatter than serious risk of damage. It appeared, indeed, that there was more of bravado than of serious attempt to do us any injury; for the Lowland gentleman, who, as I mentioned, had stood aside for want of an antagonist when the brawl commenced, was now pleased to act the part of moderator and peacemaker.

'Haud your hands—haud your hands; eneugh done—eneugh done! the quarrel's no mortal. The strange gentlemen have shown themselves men of honour, and gien reasonable satisfaction. I'll stand on mine honour as kittle as ony man, but I hate unnecessary bloodshed.'

It was not, of course, my wish to protract the fray; my adversary seemed equally disposed to sheath his sword; the Bailie, gasping for breath, might be considered as *hors de combat*, and our two sword-and-buckler men gave up their contest with as much indifference as they had entered into it.

'And now,' said the worthy gentleman who acted as umpire, 'let us drink and gree like honest fellows. The house will haud us a'. I propose that this good little gentleman that seems sair forfoughen, as I may say, in this tuilzie, shall send for a tass o' brandy, and I'll pay for another, by way of archilowe, and then we'll birl our bawbees a' round about, like brethren.'

'And fa's to pay my new ponnie plaid,' said the larger Highlander, 'wi' a hole burnt in't ane might put a kail pat through? Saw ever ony body a decent gentleman fight wi' a firebrand before?'

'Let that be nae hindrance,' said the Bailie, who had now recovered his breath, and was at once disposed to enjoy the triumph of having behaved with spirit and avoid the necessity of again resorting to such hard and doubtful arbitrement.

'Gin I hae broken the head,' he said, 'I sall find the plaister. A new plaid sall ye hae, and o' the best — your ain clan-colours, man — an ye will tell me where it can be sent t' ye frae Glasco.'

'I needna name my clan : I am of a king's clan, as is weel kend,' said the Highlander ; 'but ye may tak a bit o' the plaid — figh, she smells like a singit sheep's head ! — and that 'll learn ye the sett ; and a gentleman, that 's a cousin o' my ain, that carries eggs doun frae Glencroe, will ca' for't about Martinmas, an ye will tell her where ye bide. But, honest gentleman, neist time ye fight, an ye hae ony respect for your athversary, let it be wi' your sword, man, since ye wear aye, and no wi' thae het culters and firebrands, like a wild Indian.'

'Conscience !' replied the Bailie, 'every man maun do as he dow. My sword hasna seen the light since Bothwell Brig, when my father, that 's dead and gane, ware it ; and I kenna weel if it was forthcoming than either, for the battle was o' the briefest. At ony rate, it's glewed to the scabbard now beyond my power to part them ; and, finding that, I e'en grippit at the first thing I could make a fend wi'. I trow my fighting days is done, though I like ill to take the scorn, for a' that. But where's the honest lad that tuik my quarrel on himsell sae frankly ? I se bestow a gill o' aquavita on him, an I suld never ca' for anither.'

The champion for whom he looked around was, however, no longer to be seen. He had escaped, unobserved by the Bailie, immediately when the brawl was ended, yet not before I had recognised, in his wild features and shaggy red hair, our acquaintance Dougal, the fugitive turnkey of the Glasgow jail. I communicated this observation in a whisper to the Bailie, who answered in the same tone, 'Weel, weel, I see that him that ye ken o' said very right. There *is* some glimmering o' common sense about that creature Dougal ; I maun see and think o' something will do him some gude.'

Thus saying, he sat down, and, fetchin one or two deep aspirations by way of recovering his breath, called to the landlady : 'I think, Luckie, now that I find that there's nae hole in my wame, whilk I had muckle reason to doubt frae the doings o' your house, I wad be the better o' something to pit intill't.'

The dame, who was all officiousness so soon as the storm had blown over, immediately undertook to broil something comfortable for our supper. Indeed, nothing surprised me more, in the course of the whole matter, than the extreme calmness

with which she and her household seemed to regard the martial tumult that had taken place. The good woman was only heard to call to some of her assistants, 'Steek the door - steek the door! Kill or be killed, let naeboddy pass out till they hae paid the lawin.' And as for the slumberers in those lairs by the wall which served the family for beds, they only raised their shirtless bodlies to look at the fray, ejaculated, 'Oigh! oigh!' in the tone suitable to their respective sex and ages, and were, I believe, fast asleep again ere our swords were well returned to their scabbards.

Our landlady, however, now made a great bustle to get some victuals ready, and, to my surprise, very soon began to prepare for us, in the frying-pan, a savoury mess of venison collops, which she dressed in a manner that might well satisfy hungry men, if not epicures. In the meantime the brandy was placed on the table, to which the Highlanders, however partial to their native strong waters, showed no objection, but much the contrary; and the Lowland gentleman, after the first cup had passed round, became desirous to know our profession and the object of our journey.

'We are bits o' Glasgow bodies, if it please your honour,' said the Bailie, with an affectation of great humility, 'travelling to Stirling to get in some siller that is awing us.'

I was so silly as to feel a little disconcerted at the unassuming account which he chose to give of us; but I recollected my promise to be silent and allow the Bailie to manage the matter his own way. And really, when I recollected, Will, that I had not only brought the honest man a long journey from home, which even in itself had been some inconvenience (if I were to judge from the obvious pain and reluctance with which he took his seat or arose from it), but had also put him within a hair's-breadth of the loss of his life, I could hardly refuse him such a compliment. The spokesman of the other party, snuffing up his breath through his nose, repeated the words with a sort of sneer. 'You Glasgow tradesfolks hae naething to do but to gang frae the tae end o' the west o' Scotland to the ither to plague honest folks that may chance to be a wee ahint the hand, like me.'

'If our debtors were a' sic honest gentlemen as I believe you to be, Garschattachin,' replied the Bailie, 'conscience! we might saves ourselves a labour, for they wad come to seek us.'

'Eh! what! how!' exclaimed the person whom he had addressed, 'as I shall live by bread — not forgetting beef and

brandy — it's my auld friend Nicol Jarvie, the best man that ever counted down merks on a band till a distressed gentleman. Were ye na coming up my way? were ye na coming up the Endrick to Garschattachin?'

'Troth no, Maister Galbraith,' replied the Bailie, 'I had other eggs on the spit; and I thought ye wad be saying I cam to look about the annual rent that's due on the bit heritable band that's between us.'

'Damn the annual rent!' said the laird, with an appearance of great heartiness. 'Deil a word o' business will you or I speak, now that ye're sae near my country. To see how a trot cosey and a joseph can disguise a man — that I suldna ken my auld feal friend the deacon!'

'The bailie, if ye please,' resumed my companion. 'But I ken whaf gars ye mistak: the band was granted to my father that's happy, and he was deacon; but his name was Nicol as weel as mine. I dinna mind that there's been a payment of principal sum or annual rent on it in my day, and doubtless that has made the mistake.'

'Weel, the devil take the mistake and all that occasioned it!' replied Mr. Galbraith. 'But I am glad ye are a bailie. Gentlemen, fill a brimmer; this is my excellent friend, Bailie Nicol Jarvie's health; I kend him and his father these twenty years. Are ye a' cleared kelty aff? Fill anither. Here's to his being sune provost; I say provost — Lord Provost Nicol Jarvie! And them that affirms there's a man walks the Hie Street o' Glasgow that's fitter for the office, they will do weel not to let me, Duncan Galbraith of Garschattachin, hear them say sae, that's all.' And therewith Duncan Galbraith martially cocked his hat and placed it on one side of his head with an air of defiance.

The brandy was probably the best recommendation of these complimentary toasts to the two Highlanders, who drank them without appearing anxious to comprehend their purport. They commenced a conversation with Mr. Galbraith in Gaelic, which he talked with perfect fluency, being, as I afterwards learned, a near neighbour to the Highlands.

'I kend that Scant-o'-grace weel enough frae the very outset,' said the Bailie, in a whisper to me; 'but when blude was warm, and swords were out at ony rate, wha kens what way he might hae thought o' paying his debts? it will be lang or he does it in common form. But he's an honest lad, and has a warm heart too; he disna come often to the Cross o' Glasgow, but mony a

buck and blackcock he sends us down frae the hills. And I can want my siller weel enough. My father the deacon had a great regard for the family of Garschattachin.'

Supper being now nearly ready, I looked round for Andrew Fairservice; but that trusty follower had not been seen by any one since the beginning of the *rencontre*. The hostess, however, said that she believed our servant had gone into the stable, and offered to light me to the place, saying that 'no entreaties of the bairns or hers could make him give any answer; and that truly she caredna to gang into the stable hersell at this hour. She was a lone woman, and it was weel kend how the brownie of Ben-ye-gask guided the gudewife of Ardnagowan; and it was aye judged there was a brownie in our stable, which was just what garr'd me gie ower keeping an hostler.'

As, however, she lighted me towards the miserable hovel into which they had crammed our unlucky steeds, to regale themselves on hay, every fibre of which was as thick as an ordinary goose quill, she plainly showed me that she had another reason for drawing me aside from the company than that which her words implied. 'Read that,' she said, slipping a piece of paper into my hand as we arrived at the door of the shed; 'I bless God I am rid o't. Between rogues and Saxons, and caterans and cattle-lifters, and hership and bluidshed, an honest woman wad live quieter in hell than on the Highland line.'

So saying, she put the pine-torch into my hand, and returned into the house.

CHAPTER XXIX

Bagpipes, not lyres, the Highland hills adorn,
MacLean's loud hollo, and MacGregor's horn.

John Cooper's Reply to Allan Ramsay.

I STOPPED in the entrance of the stable, if indeed a place be entitled to that name where horses were stowed away along with goats, poultry, pigs, and cows, under the same roof with the mansion-house; although, by a degree of refinement unknown to the rest of the hamlet, and which I afterwards heard was imputed to an overpride on the part of Jeannie Mac-Alpine, our landlady, the apartment was accommodated with an entrance different from that used by her biped customers. By the light of my torch I deciphered the following billet, written on a wet, crumpled, and dirty piece of paper, and addressed, 'For the honoured hands of Mr. F. O., a Saxon young gentleman — These.' The contents were as follows:—

'SIR,
'There are night-hawks abroad, so that I cannot give you and my respected kinsman, B. N. J., the meeting at the Clachan of Aberfoil whilk was my purpose. I pray you to avoid unnecessary communication with those you may find there, as it may give future trouble. The person who gives you this is faithful, and may be trusted, and will guide you to a place where, God willing, I may safely give you the meeting, when I trust my kinsman and you will visit my poor house, where, in despite of my enemies, I can still promise sic cheer as ane Hielandman may gie his friends, and where we will drink a solemn health to a certain D. V., and look to certain affairs whilk I hope to be your aidance in; and I rest, as is wont among gentlemen, your servant to command, 'R. M. C.'

I was a good deal mortified at the purport of this letter, which seemed to adjourn to a more distant place and date the

service which I had hoped to receive from this man Campbell. Still, however, it was some comfort to know that he continued to be in my interest, since without him I could have no hope of recovering my father's papers. I resolved, therefore, to obey his instructions; and, observing all caution before the guests, to take the first good opportunity I could find to procure from the landlady directions how I was to obtain a meeting with this mysterious person.

My next business was to seek out Andrew Fairservice, whom I called several times by name without receiving any answer, surveying the stable all round, at the same time, not without risk of setting the premises on fire, had not the quantity of wet litter and mud so greatly counterbalanced two or three bunches of straw and hay. At length my repeated cries of 'Andrew Fairservice — Andrew! Fool! Ass, where are you?' produced a doleful 'Here,' in a groaning tone, which might have been that of the brownie itself. Guided by this sound, I advanced to the corner of a shed, where, ensconced in the angle of the wall, behind a barrel full of the feathers of all the fowls which had died in the cause of the public for a month past, I found the manful Andrew; and partly by force, partly by command and exhortation, compelled him forth into the open air. The first words he spoke were, 'I am an honest lad, sir.'

'Who the devil questions your honesty?' said I; 'or what have we to do with it at present? I desire you to come and attend us at supper.'

'Yes,' reiterated Andrew, without apparently understanding what I said to him, 'I am an honest lad, whatever the Bailie may say to the contrary. I grant the world and the world's gear sits ower near my heart whiles, as it does to mony a ane. But I am an honest lad; and, though I spak o' leaving ye in the muir, yet God knows it was far frae my purpose, but just like idle things folk says when they're driving a bargain, to get it as far to their ain side as they can. And I like your honour weel for sae young a lad, and I wadna part wi' ye lightly.'

'What the deuce are you driving at now?' I replied. 'Has not everything been settled again and again to your satisfaction? And are you to talk of leaving me every hour, without either rhyme or reason?'

'Ay, but I was only making fashion before,' replied Andrew; 'but it's come on me in sair earnest now. Lose or win, I daur gae nae farther wi' your honour; and if ye'll tak my foolish

advice, ye'll bide by a broken tryste rather than gang forward yoursell; I hae a sincere regard for ye, and I'm sure ye'll be a credit to your friends if ye live to saw out your wild aits and get some mair sense and steadiness. But I can follow ye nae farther, even if ye suld founder and perish from the way for lack of guidance and counsel; to gang into Rob Roy's country is a mere tempting o' Providence.

'Rob Roy?' said I, in some surprise; 'I know no such person. What new trick is this, Andrew?'

'It's hard,' said Andrew — 'very hard, that a man canna be believed when he speaks Heaven's truth, just because he's whiles owercome, and tells lees a little when there is necessary occasion. Ye needna ask whae Rob Roy is, the reiving lifter that he is — God forgie me! I hope naeboddy hears us — when ye hae a letter frae him in your pouch. I heard ane o' his gillies bid that auld rudas jaud of a gudewife gie ye that. They thought I didna understand their gibberish; but, though I canna speak it muckle, I can gie a gude guess at what I hear them say. I never thought to hae tauld ye that, but in a fright a' things come out that suld be keepit in. O, Maister Frank, a' your uncle's follies and a' your cousins' pliskies were naething to this! Drink clean cap out, like Sir Hildebrand; begin the blessed morning with brandy sops, like Squire Percy; swagger, like Squire Thorncliff; rin wud amang the lasses, like Squire John; gamble, like Richard; win souls to the pope and the deevil, like Rashleigh; rive, rant, break the Sabbath, and do the pope's bidding, like them a'; ut thegither — but, merciful Providence! take care o' your young bluid, and gang nae near Rob Roy!'

Andrew's alarm was too sincere to permit me to suppose he counterfeited. I contented myself, however, with telling him that I meant to remain in the ale-house that night, and desired to have the horses well looked after. As to the rest, I charged him to observe the strictest silence upon the subject of his alarm, and he might rely upon it I would not incur any serious danger without due precaution. He followed me with a dejected air into the house, observing between his teeth, 'Man suld be served afore beast; I haena had a morsel in my mouth, but the rough legs o' that auld muircock, this hail blessed day.'

The harmony of the company seemed to have suffered some interruption since my departure, for I found Mr. Galbraith and my friend the Bailie high in dispute.

'I'll hear nae sic language,' said Mr. Jarvie, as I entered, 'respecting the Duke o' Argyle and the name o' Campbell. He's a worthy public-spirited nobleman, and a credit to the country, and a friend and benefactor to the trade o' Glasgow.'

'I'll sae naething against MacCallum More and the Slioch-nan-Diarmid,' said the lesser Highlander, laughing. 'I live on the wrang side of Glencroe to quarrel with Inverara.'

'Our loch ne'er saw the Cawmil lymphads,' said the bigger Highlander. 'She'll speak her mind and fear naebody. She doesna value a Cawmil mair as a Cowan, and ye may tell Mac-Callum More that Allan Inverach said sae. "It's a far cry to Lochow."'¹

Mr. Galbraith, on whom the repeated pledges which he had quaffed had produced some influence, slapped his hand on the table with great force, and said in a stern voice, 'there's a bloody debt due by that family, and they will pay it one day. The banes of a loyal and a gallant Grahame hae lang rattled in their coffin for vengeance on thae Dukes of Guile and Lords for Lorn. There ne'er was treason in Scotland but a Cawmil was at the bottom o't; and now that the wrang side's uppermost, wha but the Cawmils for keeping down the right? But this world winna last lang, and it will be time to sharp the maiden for shearing o' craigs and thrapples. I hope to see the auld rusty lass linking at a bluidy harst again.'

'For shame, Garschattachin!' exclaimed the Bailie — 'fie for shame, sir; wad ye say sic things before a magistrate, and bring yoursell into trouble? How d'ye think to mainteen your family and satisfy your creditors — mysell and others — if ye gang on in that wild way, which cannot but bring you under the law, to the prejudice of a' that's connected wi' ye?'

'D—n my creditors,' retorted the gallant Galbraith, 'and you, if ye be ane o' them. I say there will be a new world sune. And we shall hae nae Cawmils cocking their bonnet sae hie, and hounding their dogs where they daurna come themselfs, nor protecting thieves, nor murderers and oppressors, to harry and spoil better men and mair loyal clans than themselfs.'

The Bailie had a great mind to have continued the dispute, when the savoury vapour of the broiled venison, which our landlady now placed before us, proved so powerful a mediator that he betook himself to his trencher with great eagerness, leaving the strangers to carry on the dispute among themselves.

¹ Lochow and the adjacent districts formed the original seat of the Campbells. The expression of a 'far cry to Lochow' was proverbial.

'And tat's true,' said the taller Highlander, whose name I found was Stuart, 'for we suldna be plagued and worried here wi' meetings to pit down Rob Roy if the Cawmils didna gie him refutch. I was ane o' thirty o' my ain name — part Glenfinlas, and part men that came down frae Appine — we shased the MacGregors as ye wad shase rae-deer, till we came into Glenfalloch's country, and the Cawmils raise and wadna let us pursue nae farder, and sae we lost our labour; but her wad gie twa and a plack to be as near Rob as she was tat day.'

It seemed to happen very unfortunately that in every topic of discourse which these warlike gentlemen introduced my friend the Bailie found some matter of offence. 'Ye'll forgie me speaking my mind, sir; but ye wad maybe hae gien the best bowl in your bonnet to hae been as far awa frae Rob as ye are e'en now. Odd, my het pleugh-culter wad hae been naething to his claymore.'

'She had better speak nae mair about her culter, or, by G—, her will gar her eat her words, and twa handfuls o' cauld steel to drive them ower wi'!' And with a most inauspicious and menacing look the mountaineer laid his hand on his dagger.

'We'll hae nae quarrelling, Allan,' said his shorter companion; 'and if the Glasgow gentleman has ony regard for Rob Roy, he'll maybe see him in cauld irons the night, and playing tricks on a tow the morn; for this country has been ower lang plagued wi' him, and his race is near-hand run. And it's tim, Allan, we were ganging to our lads.'

'Hout awa, Inverashalloch,' said Galbraith. 'Mind the auld saw, man: "It's a bauld moon," quoth Bennyngask; "another pint," quoth Lesley. We'll no start for another chappin.'

'I hae had chappins eneugh,' said Inverashalloch; 'I'll drink my quart of usquebaugh or brandy wi' ony honest fellow. but the deil a drap mair, when I hae wark to do in the morning. And, in my puir thinking, Garschattachin, ye had better be thinking to bring up your horsemen to the clachan before day, that we may a' start fair.'

'What the deevil are ye in sic a hurry for?' said Garschattachin; 'meat and mass never hindered wark. An it had been my directing, deil a bit o' me wad hae fashed ye to come down the glens to help us. The garrison and our ain horse could hae taen Rob Roy easily eneugh. There's the hand,' he said, holding up his own, 'should lay him on the green, and never ask a Hielandman o' ye a' for his help.'

'Ye might hae loot us bide still where we were, then,' said

Inverashalloch. 'I didna come sixty miles without being sent for. But an ye'll hae my opinion, I redd ye keep your mouth better steekit, if ye hope to speed. Shored folk live lang, and sae may him ye ken o'. The way to catch a bird is no to fling your bannet at her. And also thae gentlemen hae heard some things they suldna hae heard an the brandy hadna been ower bauld for your brain, Major Galbraith. Ye needna cock your hat and bully wi' me, man, for I will not bear it.'

'I hae said it,' said Galbraith, with a solemn air of drunken gravity, 'that I will quarrel no more this night either with broadcloth or tartan. When I am off duty I'll quarrel with you or ony man in the Hielands or Lowlands, but not on duty — no — no. I wish we heard o' these redcoats. If it had been to do ony thing against King James we wad hae seen them lang syne; but when it's to keep the peace o' the country they can lie as lound as their neighbours.'

As he spoke we heard the measured footsteps of a body of infantry on the march; and an officer, followed by two or three files of soldiers, entered the apartment. He spoke in an English accent, which was very pleasant to my ears, now so long accustomed to the varying brogue of the Highland and Lowland Scotch.

'You are, I suppose, Major Galbraith, of the squadron of Lennox militia, and these are the two Highland gentlemen with whom I was appointed to meet in this place?'

They assented, and invited the officer to take some refreshments, which he declined.

'I have been too late, gentlemen, and am desirous to make up time. I have orders to search for and arrest two persons guilty of treasonable practices.'

'We'll wash our hands o' that,' said Inverashalloch. 'I came here wi' my men to fight against the red MacGregor that killed my cousin seven times removed, Duncan MacLaren in Invernenty;¹ but I will hae nothing to do touching honest gentlemen that may be gaun through the country on their ain business.'

'Nor I neither,' said Inverach.

Major Galbraith took up the matter more solemnly, and, premising his oration with a hiccup, spoke to the following purpose: 'I shall say nothing against King George, Captain, because, as it happens, my commission may rin in his name; but one commission being good, sir, does not make another bad, and

¹ See Slaughter of MacLaren. Note 11.

some think that James may be just as good a name as George. There's the king that is and there's the king that suld of right be; I say, an honest man may and suld be loyal to them both, Captain. But I am of the Lord-Lieutenant's opinion for the time, as it becomes a militia officer and a depute-lieutenant; and about treason and all that, it's lost time to speak of it, least said is sunest mended.'

'I am sorry to see how you have been employing your time, sir,' replied the English officer, as indeed the honest gentleman's reasoning had a strong relish of the liquor he had been drinking; 'and I could wish, sir, it had been otherwise on an occasion of this consequence. I would recommend to you to try to sleep for an hour. Do these gentlemen belong to your party?' looking at the Bailie and me, who, engaged in eating our supper, had paid little attention to the officer on his entrance.

'Travellers, sir,' said Galbraith — 'lawful travellers by sea and land, as the prayer book hath it.'

'My instructions,' said the Captain, taking a light to survey us closer, 'are to place under arrest an elderly and a young person, and I think these gentlemen answer nearly the description.'

'Take care what you say, sir,' said Mr. Jarvie; 'it shall not be your red coat nor your laced hat shall protect you if you put any affront on me. I'll convene ye baith in an action of scandal and false imprisonment. I am a free burgess and a magistrate o' Glasgow; Nicol Jarvie is my name, sae was my father's afore me; I am a bailie, be praised for the honour, and my father was a deacon.'

'He was a prick-eared cur,' said Major Galbraith, 'and fought agane the King at Bothwell Brig.'

'He paid what he ought and what he bought, Mr. Galbraith,' said the Bailie, 'and was an honest man than ever stude on your shanks.'

'I have no time to attend to all this,' said the officer; 'I must positively detain you, gentlemen, unless you can produce some respectable security that you are loyal subjects.'

'I desire to be carried before some civil magistrate,' said the Bailie, 'the sherra or the judge of the bounds; I am not obliged to answer every redcoat that speers questions at me.'

'Well, sir, I shall know how to manage you if you are silent. And you, sir (to me), what may your name be?'

'Francis Osbaldistone, sir.'

'What, a son of Sir Hildebrand Osbaldistone of Northumberland ?'

'No, sir,' interrupted the Bailie ; 'a son of the great William Osbaldistone, of the house of Osbaldistone and Tresham, Crane Alley, London.'

'I am afraid, sir,' said the officer, 'your name only increases the suspicions against you, and lays me under the necessity of requesting that you will give up what papers you have in charge.'

I observed the Highlanders look anxiously at each other when this proposal was made. 'I had none,' I replied, 'to surrender.'

The officer commanded me to be disarmed and searched. To have resisted would have been madness. I accordingly gave up my arms, and submitted to a search, which was conducted as civilly as an operation of the kind well could. They found nothing except the note which I had received that night through the hand of the landlady.

'This is different from what I expected,' said the officer ; 'but it affords us good grounds for detaining you. Here I find you in written communication with the outlawed robber, Robert MacGregor Campbell, who has been so long the plague of this district. How do you account for that ?'

'Spies of Rob !' said Inverashalloch ; 'we wad serve them right to strap them up till the neist tree.'

'We are gaun to see after some gear o' our ain, gentlemen,' said the Bailie, 'that's fa'en into his hands by accident ; there's nae law agane a man looking after his ain, I hope ?'

'How did you come by this letter ?' said the officer, addressing himself to me.

I could not think of betraying the poor woman who had given it to me, and remained silent.

'Do you know anything of it, fellow ?' said the officer, looking at Andrew, whose jaws were chattering like a pair of castanets at the threats thrown out by the Highlander.

'O ay, I ken a' about it. It was a Hieland loon gied the letter to that lang-tongued jaud the gudewife there. I'll be sworn my maister kend naething about it. But he's wilfu' to gang up the hills and speak wi' Rob ; and O, sir, it wad be a charity just to send a wheen o' your redcoats to see him safe back to Glasgow again whether he will or no. And ye can keep Mr. Jarvie as lang as ye like. He's responsible eneugh for any fine ye may lay on him ; and so's my master for that matter :

for me, I'm just a puir gardener lad, and no worth your steering.'

'I believe,' said the officer, 'the best thing I can do is to send these persons to the garrison under an escort. They seem to be in immediate correspondence with the enemy, and I shall be in no respect answerable for suffering them to be at liberty. Gentlemen, you will consider yourselves as my prisoners. So soon as dawn approaches I will send you to a place of security. If you be the persons you describe yourselves, it will soon appear, and you will sustain no great inconvenience from being detained a day or two. I can hear no remonstrances,' he continued, turning away from the Bailie, whose mouth was open to address him; 'the service I am on gives me no time for idle discussions.'

'Aweel — aweel, sir,' said the Bailie, 'you're welcome to a tune on your ain fiddle; but see if I dinna gar ye dance till 't afore a's dune.'

An anxious consultation now took place between the officer and the Highlanders, but carried on in so low a tone that it was impossible to catch the sense. So soon as it was concluded they all left the house. At their departure, the Bailie thus expressed himself: 'Thae Hielandmen are o' the westland clans, and just as light-handed as their neighbours, an a' tales be true, and yet ye see they hae brought them frae the head o' Argyllshire to make war wi' puir Rob for some auld ill-will that they hae at him and his sirname. And there's the Grahames and the Buchanans and the Lennox gentry a' mounted and in order. It's weel kend their quarrel, and I dinna blame them: naebody likes to lose his kye. And then there's sodgers, puir things, hoyed out frae the garrison at a'body's bidding. Puir Rob will hae his hands fu' by the time the sun comes ower the hill. Weel, it's wrang for a magistrate to be wishing ony thing agane the course o' justice, but deil o' me an I wad break my heart to hear that Rob had gien them a' their paiks!'

CHAPTER XXX

General,
Hear me, and mark me well, and look upon me
Directly in my face — my woman's face ;
See if one fear, one shadow of a terror,
One paleness dare appear, but from my anger,
To lay hold on your mercies.

Bonduca.

WE were permitted to slumber out the remainder of the night in the best manner that the miserable accommodations of the ale-house permitted. The Bailie, fatigued with his journey at the subsequent scenes, less interested also in the event of our arrest, which to him could only be a matter of temporary inconvenience, perhaps less nice than habit had rendered me about the cleanliness or decency of his couch, tumbled himself into one of the cribs which I have already described, and soon was heard to snore soundly. A broken sleep, snatched by intervals, while I rested my head upon the table, was my only refreshment. In the course of the night I had occasion to observe that there seemed to be some doubt and hesitation in the motions of the soldiery. Men were sent out as if to obtain intelligence, and returned apparently without bringing any satisfactory information to their commanding officer. He was obviously eager and anxious, and again despatched small parties of two or three men, some of whom, as I could understand from what the others whispered to each other, did not return again to the clachan.

The morning had broken when a corporal and two men rushed into the hut, dragging after them, in a sort of triumph, a Highlander, whom I immediately recognised as my acquaintance the ex-turnkey. The Bailie, who started up at the noise with which they entered, immediately made the same discovery, and exclaimed, 'Mercy on us! they hae grippit the puir creature Dougal. Captain, I will put in bail — sufficient bail, for that Dougal creature.'

To this offer, dictated undoubtedly by a grateful recollection of the late interference of the Highlander in his behalf, the Captain only answered by requesting Mr. Jarvie to 'mind his own affairs, and remember that he was himself for the present a prisoner.'

'I take you to witness, Mr. Osbaldistone,' said the Bailie, who was probably better acquainted with the process in civil than in military cases, 'that he has refused sufficient bail. It's my opinion that the creature Dougal will have a good action of wrongous imprisonment and damages agane him, under the Act Seventeen Hundred and One, and I'll see the creature righted.'

The officer, whose name I understood was Thornton, paying no attention to the Bailie's threats or expostulations, instituted a very close inquiry into Dougal's life and conversation, and compelled him to admit, though with apparent reluctance, the successive facts, that he knew Rob Roy MacGregor; that he had seen him within these twelve months — within these six months — within this month — within this week; in fine, that he had parted from him only an hour ago. All this detail came like drops of blood from the prisoner, and was, to all appearance, only extorted by the threat of an halter and the next tree, which Captain Thornton assured him should be his doom if he did not give direct and special information.

'And now, my friend,' said the officer, 'you will please inform me how many men your master has with him at present.'

Dougal looked in every direction except at the querist, and began to answer, 'She canna just be sure about that.'

'Look at me, you Highland dog,' said the officer, 'and remember your life depends on your answer. How many rogues had that outlawed scoundrel with him when you left him?'

'Ou, no aboon sax rogues when I was gane.'

'And where are the rest of his banditti?'

'Gane wi' the lieutenant agane ta westland carles.'

'Against the westland clans?' said the Captain. 'Umph! that is likely enough; and what rogue's errand were you despatched upon?'

'Just to see what your honour and ta gentlemen redcoats were doing down here at ta clachan.'

'The creature will prove fause-hearted after a', said the Bailie, who by this time had planted himself close behind me; 'it's lucky I didna pit mysell to expenses anent him.'

'And now, my friend,' said the Captain, 'let us understand each other. You have confessed yourself a spy, and should string up to the next tree; but come, if you will do me one good turn I will do you another. You, Donald — you shall just in the way of kindness carry me and a small party to the place where you left your master, as I wish to speak a few words with him on serious affairs; and I'll let you go about your business and give you five guineas to boot.'

'Oigh! oigh!' exclaimed Dougal, in the extremity of distress and perplexity, 'she canna do tat — she canna do tat; she'll rather be hanged.'

'Hanged, then, you shall be, my friend,' said the officer; 'and your blood be upon your own head. Corporal Cramp, do you play provost-marshal; away with him!'

The corporal had confronted poor Dougal for some time, ostentatiously twisting a piece of cord which he had found in the house into the form of a halter. He now threw it about the culprit's neck, and, with the assistance of two soldiers, had dragged Dougal as far as the door, when, overcome with the terror of immediate death, he exclaimed, 'Shentlemans, stops — stops! She'll do his honour's bidding; stops!'

'Awa wi' the creature!' said the Bailie, 'he deserves hanging mair now than ever — awa wi' him, corporal; why dinna ye tak him awa!'

'It's my belief and opinion, honest gentleman,' said the corporal, 'that if you were going to be hanged yourself you would be in no such d—d hurry.'

This re-dialogue prevented my hearing what passed between the prisoner and Captain Thornton, but I heard the former snivel out, in a very subdued tone, 'And ye'll ask her to gang nae farther than just to show ye where the MacGregor is? Ohon! ohon!'

'Silence your howling, you rascal. No; I give you my word I will ask you to go no farther. Corporal, make the men fall in in front of the houses. Get out these gentlemen's horses; we must carry them with us. I cannot spare any men to guard them here. Come, my lads, get under arms.'

The soldiers bustled about, and were ready to move. We were led out, along with Dougal, in the capacity of prisoners. As we left the hut I heard our companion in captivity remind the Captain of 'ta foive kuineas.'

'Here they are for you,' said the officer, putting gold into

his hand ; 'but observe, that if you attempt to mislead me, I will blow your brains out with my own hand.'

'The creature,' said the Bailie, 'is waur than I judged him ; it is a warldly and a perfidious creature. O the filthy lucre of gain that men gie themselfs up to ! My father the deacon used to say the penny siller slew mair souls than the naked sword slew bodies.'

The landlady now approached and demanded payment of her reckoning, including all that had been quaffed by Major Galbraith and his Highland friends. The English officer remonstrated, but Mrs. MacAlpine declared, if she 'hadna trusted to his honour's name being used in their company, she wad never hae drawn them a stoup o' liquor ; for Mr. Galbraith, she might see him again or she might no, but weel did she wot she had sma' chance of seeing her siller ; and she was a puir widow, had naething but her custom to rely on.'

Captain Thornton put a stop to her remonstrances by paying the charge, which was only a few English shillings, though the amount sounded very formidable in Scottish denominations. The generous officer would have included Mr. Jarvie and me in this general acquittance ; but the Bailie, disregarding an intimation from the landlady to 'make as muckle of the Inglishers as we could, for they were sure to gie us plague enugh,' went into a formal accounting respecting our share of the reckoning, and paid it accordingly. The Captain took the opportunity to make us some slight apology for detaining us. 'If we were loyal and peaceable subjects,' he said, 'we would not regret being stopped for a day, when it was essential to the king's service ; if otherwise, he was acting according to his duty.'

We were compelled to accept an apology which it would have served no purpose to refuse, and we sallied out to attend him on his march.

I shall never forget the delightful sensation with which I exchanged the dark, smoky, smothering atmosphere of the Highland hut, in which we had passed the night so uncomfortably, for the refreshing fragrance of the morning air, and the glorious beams of the rising sun, which, from a tabernacle of purple and golden clouds, were darted full on such a scene of natural romance and beauty as had never before greeted my eyes. To the left lay the valley, down which the Forth wandered on its easterly course, surrounding the beautiful detached hill, with all its garland of woods. On the right, amid a

profusion of thickets, knolls, and crags, lay the bed of a broad mountain lake, lightly curled into tiny waves by the breath of the morning breeze, each glittering in its course under the influence of the sunbeams. High hills, rocks, and banks, waving with natural forests of birch and oak, formed the borders of this enchanting sheet of water; and, as their leaves rustled to the wind and twinkled in the sun, gave to the depth of solitude a sort of life and vivacity. Man alone seemed to be placed in a state of inferiority, in a scene where all the ordinary features of nature were raised and exalted. The miserable little 'bour-ocks,' as the Bailie termed them, of which about a dozen formed the village called the Clachan of Aberfoil, were composed of loose stones, cemented by clay instead of mortar, and thatched by turfs, laid rudely upon rafters formed of native and unbewn birches and oaks from the woods around. The roofs approached the ground so nearly that Andrew Fairservice observed we might have ridden over the village the night before, and never found out we were near it, unless our horses' feet had 'gane through the riggin.'

From all we could see, Mrs. MacAlpine's house, miserable as were the quarters it afforded, was still by far the best in the hamlet; and I daresay (if my description gives you any curiosity to see it) you will hardly find it much improved at the present day, for the Scotch are not a people who speedily admit innovation, even when it comes in the shape of improvement.¹

The inhabitants of these miserable dwellings were disturbed by the noise of our departure; and as our party of about twenty soldiers drew up in rank before marching off, we were reconnoitered by many a beldam from the half-opened door of her cottage. As these sibyls thrust forth their grey heads, imperfectly covered with close caps of flannel, and showed their shrivelled brows, and long skinny arms, with various gestures, shrugs, and muttered expressions in Gaelic addressed to each other, my imagination recurred to the witches of Macbeth, and I imagined I read in the features of these crones the malevolence of the weird sisters. The little children also, who began to crawl forth, some quite naked, and others very imperfectly covered with tatters of tartan stuff, clapped their tiny hands and grinned at the English soldiers, with an expression of national hate and malignity which seemed beyond their years. I remarked particularly that there were no men, nor so much as

¹ See Aberfoil. Note 12.

a boy of ten or twelve years old, to be seen among the inhabitants of a village which seemed populous in proportion to its extent; and the idea certainly occurred to me that we were likely to receive from them, in the course of our journey, more effectual tokens of ill-will than those which lowered on the visages and dictated the murmurs of the women and children.

It was not until we commenced our march that the malignity of the elder persons of the community broke forth into expressions. The last file of men had left the village, to pursue a small broken track, formed by the sledges in which the natives transported their peats and turfs, and which led through the woods that fringed the lower end of the lake, when a shrilly sound of female exclamation broke forth, mixed with the screams of children, the whooping of boys, and the clapping of hands with which the Highland dames enforce their notes, whether of rage or lamentation. I asked Andrew, who looked as pale as death, what all this meant.

'I doubt we'll ken that ower sune,' said he. 'Means! It means that the Highland wives are cursing and banning the redcoats, and wishing ill-luck to them, and ilka ane that ever spoke the Saxon tongue. I have heard wives flyte in England and Scotland; it's nae marvel to hear them flyte ony gate, but sic ill-scrapit tongues as thae Hieland carlines', and sic grew-some wishes, that men should be slaughtered like sheep, and that they may lapper their hands to the elbows in their heart's blude, and that they suld dee the death of Walter Cuning of Guisock,¹ wha hadna as muckle o' him left thegither as would supper a messan-dog — sic awsome language as that I ne'er heard out o' a human thrapple; and, unless the deil wad rise amang them to gie them a lesson, I thinkna that their talent at cursing could be amended. The warst o't is, they bid us aye gang up the loch and see what we'll land in.'

Adding Andrew's information to what I had myself observed, I could scarce doubt that some attack was meditated upon our party. The road, as we advanced, seemed to afford every facility for such an unpleasant interruption. At first it winded apart from the lake through marshy meadow ground, overgrown with copsewood, now traversing dark and close thickets which would have admitted an ambuscade to be sheltered within a few yards of our line of march, and frequently crossing rough mountain torrents, some of which took the soldiers up the knees, and ran with such violence that their force could

¹ See Note 13.

be stemmed by the strength of two or three men holding fast by each other's arms. It certainly appeared to me, though altogether unacquainted with military affairs, that a sort of half-savage warriors, as I had heard the Highlanders asserted to be, might, in such passes as these, attack a party of regular forces with great advantage. The Bailie's good sense and shrewd observation had led him to the same conclusion, as I understood from his requesting to speak with the Captain, whom he addressed nearly in the following terms: 'Captain, it's no to fleech ony favour out o' ye, for I scorn it; and it's under protest that I reserve my action and pleas of oppression and wrongous imprisonment; but, being a friend to King George and his army, I take the liberty to speer — Dinna ye think ye might tak a better time to gang up this glen? If ye are seeking Rob Roy, he's kend to be better than half a hunder men strong when he's at the fewest; and if he brings in the Glengyle folk and the Glenfinlas and Balquidder lads, he may come to gie you your kail through the reek; and it's my sincere advice, as a king's friend, ye had better take back again to the clachan, for thae women at Aberfoil are like the scarts and seamaws at the Cumries: there's aye foul weather follows their skirling.'

'Make yourself easy, sir,' replied Captain Thornton, 'I am in the execution of my orders. And as you say you are a friend to King George, you will be glad to learn that it is impossible that this gang of ruffians, whose license has disturbed the country so long, can escape the measures now taken to suppress them. The horse squadron of militia, commanded by Major Galbraith, is already joined by two or more troops of cavalry, which will occupy all the lower passes of this wild country; three hundred Highlanders, under the two gentlemen you saw at the inn, are in possession of the upper part; and various strong parties from the garrison are securing the hills and glens in different directions. Our last accounts of Rob Roy correspond with what this fellow has confessed, that, finding himself surrounded on all sides, he had dismissed the greater part of his followers, with the purpose either of lying concealed or of making his escape through his superior knowledge of the passes.'

'I dinna ken,' said the Bailie; 'there's mair brandy than brains in Garschattachin's head this morning. And I wadna, an I were you, Captain, rest my main dependence on the Hielandmen: hawks winna pike out hawks' een. They may

quarrel amang themselfs, and gie ilk ither ill names, and maybe a slash wi' a claymore; but they are sure to join in the lang run against a' civilised folk that wear breeks on their hinder ends and hae purses in their pouches.'

Apparently these admonitions were not altogether thrown away on Captain Thornton. He reformed his line of march, commanded his soldiers to unsling their firelocks and fix their bayonets, and formed an advanced and rear guard, each consisting of a non-commissioned officer and two soldiers, who received strict orders to keep an alert look-out. Dougal underwent another and very close examination, in which he steadfastly asserted the truth of what he had before affirmed; and being rebuked on account of the suspicious and dangerous appearance of the route by which he was guiding them, he answered with a sort of testiness that seemed very natural, 'Her nainsell didna mak ta road; an shentlemans likit grand roads, she suld hae pided at Glasco.'

All this passed off well enough, and we resumed our progress.

Our route, though leading towards the lake, had hitherto been so much shaded by wood that we only from time to time obtained a glimpse of that beautiful sheet of water. But the road now suddenly emerged from the forest ground, and, winding close by the margin of the loch, afforded us a full view of its spacious mirror, which now, the breeze having totally subsided, reflected in still magnificence the high dark heathy mountains, huge gray rocks, and shaggy banks, by which it is encircled. The hills now sunk on its margin so closely, and were so broken and precipitous, as to afford no passage except just upon the narrow line of the track which we occupied, and which was overhung with rocks, from which we might have been destroyed merely by rolling down stones, without much possibility of offering resistance. Add to this, that, as the road winded round every promontory and bay which indented the lake, there was rarely a possibility of seeing a hundred yards before us. Our commander appeared to take some alarm at the nature of the pass in which he was engaged, which displayed itself in repeated orders to his soldiers to be on the alert, and in many threats of instant death to Dougal if he should be found to have led them into danger. Dougal received these threats with an air of stupid impenetrability, which might arise either from conscious innocence or from dogged resolution.

'If shentlemans were seeking ta Red Gregarach,' he said, 'to

be sure they couldna expect to find her without some wee danger.'

Just as the Highlander uttered these words, a halt was made by the corporal commanding the advance, who sent back one of the file who formed it to tell the Captain that the path in front was occupied by Highlanders, stationed on a commanding point of particular difficulty. Almost at the same instant a soldier from the rear came to say that they heard the sound of a bagpipe in the woods through which we had just passed. Captain Thornton, a man of conduct as well as courage, instantly resolved to force the pass in front, without waiting till he was assailed from the rear; and, assuring his soldiers that the bagpipes which they heard were those of the friendly Highlanders who were advancing to their assistance, he stated to them the importance of advancing and securing Rob Roy, if possible, before these auxiliaries should come up to divide with them the honour, as well as the reward which was placed on the head of this celebrated freebooter. He therefore ordered the rear-guard to join the centre, and both to close up to the advance, doubling his files so as to occupy with his column the whole practicable part of the road, and to present such a front as its breadth admitted. Dougal, to whom he said in a whisper, 'You dog, if you have deceived me you shall die for it!' was placed in the centre, between two grenadiers, with positive orders to shoot him if he attempted an escape. The same situation was assigned to us as being the safest, and Captain Thornton, taking his half-pike from the soldier who carried it, placed himself at the head of his little detachment and gave the word to march forward.

The party advanced with the firmness of English soldiers. Not so Andrew Fairservice, who was frightened out of his wits; and not so, if truth must be told, either the Bailie or I myself, who, without feeling the same degree of trepidation, could not with stoical indifference see our lives exposed to hazard in a quarrel with which we had no concern. But there was neither time for remonstrance nor remedy.

We approached within about twenty yards of the spot where the advanced guard had seen some appearance of an enemy. It was one of those promontories which run into the lake, and round the base of which the road had hitherto winded in the manner I have described. In the present case, however, the path, instead of keeping the water's edge, scaled the promontory by one or two rapid zigzags, carried in a broken

track along the precipitous face of a stony grey rock, which would otherwise have been absolutely inaccessible. On the top of this rock, only to be approached by a road so broken, so narrow, and so precarious, the corporal declared he had seen the bonnets and long-barrelled guns of several mountaineers, apparently couched among the long heath and brushwood which crested the eminence. Captain Thornton ordered him to move forward with three files to dislodge the supposed ambuscade, while at a more slow but steady pace he advanced to his support with the rest of his party.

The attack which he meditated was prevented by the unexpected apparition of a female upon the summit of the rock. 'Stand!' she said, with a commanding tone, 'and tell me what ye seek in MacGregor's country?'

I have seldom seen a finer or more commanding form than this woman. She might be between the term of forty and fifty years, and had a countenance which must once have been of a masculine cast of beauty; though now, imprinted with deep lines by exposure to rough weather, and perhaps by the wasting influence of grief and passion, its features were only strong, harsh, and expressive. She wore her plaid, not drawn around her head and shoulders, as is the fashion of the women in Scotland, but disposed around her body as the Highland soldiers wear theirs. She had a man's bonnet, with a feather in it, an unsheathed sword in her hand, and a pair of pistols at her girdle.

'It's Helen Campbell, Rob's wife,' said the Bailie, in a whisper of considerable alarm; 'and there will be broken heads among us or it's lang.'

'What seek ye here?' she asked again of Captain Thornton, who had himself advanced to reconnoitre.

'We seek the outlaw, Rob Roy MacGregor Campbell,' answered the officer, 'and make no war on women; therefore offer no vain opposition to the king's troops, and assure yourself of civil treatment.'

'Ay,' retorted the amazon, 'I am no stranger to your tender mercies. Ye have left me neither name nor fame; my mother's bones will shrink aside in their grave when mine are laid beside them. Ye have left me and mine neither house nor hold, blanket nor bedding, cattle to feed us, or flocks to clothe us. Ye have taken from us all — all! The very name of our ancestors have ye taken away, and now ye come for our lives.'

'I seek no man's life,' replied the Captain; 'I only execute

my orders. If you are alone, good woman, you have nought to fear; if there are any with you so rash as to offer useless resistance, their own blood be on their own heads. Move forward, sergeant.'

'Forward, march,' said the non-commissioned officer. 'Huzza, my boys, for Rob Roy's head and a purse of gold!'

He quickened his pace into a run, followed by the six soldiers; but as they attained the first traverse of the ascent the flash of a dozen of firelocks from various parts of the pass parted in quick succession and deliberate aim. The sergeant, shot through the body, still struggled to gain the ascent, raised himself by his hands to clamber up the face of the rock, but relaxed his grasp after a desperate effort, and falling, rolled from the face of the cliff into the deep lake, where he perished. Of the soldiers three fell, slain or disabled; the others retreated on their main body, all more or less wounded.

'Grenadiers, to the front!' said Captain Thornton. You are to recollect that in those days this description of soldiers actually carried that destructive species of firework from which they derive their name. The four grenadiers moved to the front accordingly. The officer commanded the rest of the party to be ready to support them, and only saying to us, 'Look to your safety, gentlemen,' gave, in rapid succession, the word to the grenadiers; 'Open your pouches, handle your grenades, blow your matches, fall on.'

The whole advanced with a shout, headed by Captain Thornton, the grenadiers preparing to throw their grenades among the bushes where the ambuscade lay, and the musketeers to support them by an instant and close assault. Dougal, forgotten in the scuffle, wisely crept into the thicket which overhung that part of the road where we had first halted, which he ascended with the activity of a wild cat. I followed his example, instinctively recollecting that the fire of the Highlanders would sweep the open track. I clambered until out of breath; for a continued spattering fire, in which every shot was multiplied by a thousand echoes, the hissing of the kindled fusees of the grenades, and the successive explosion of those missiles, mingled with the huzzas of the soldiers and the yells and cries of their Highland antagonists, formed a contrast which added — I do not shame to own it — wings to my desire to reach a place of safety. The difficulties of the ascent soon increased so much that I despaired of reaching Dougal, who seemed to swing himself from rock to rock, and stump to

stump, with the facility of a squirrel, and I turned down my eyes to see what had become of my other companions. Both were brought to a very awkward standstill.

The Bailie, to whom I suppose fear had given a temporary share of agility, had ascended about twenty feet from the path, when his foot slipping, as he straddled from one huge fragment of rock to another, he would have slumbered with his father the deacon, whose acts and words he was so fond of quoting, but for a projecting branch of a ragged thorn, which, catching hold of the skirts of his riding coat, supported him in mid-air, where he dangled not unlike to the sign of the Golden Fleece over the door of a mercer in the Tron-gate of his native city.

As for Andrew Fairservice, he had advanced with better success until he had attained the top of a bare cliff, which, rising above the wood, exposed him, at least in his own opinion, to all the dangers of the neighbouring skirmish, while at the same time it was of such a precipitous and impracticable nature that he dared neither to advance nor retreat. Footing it up and down upon the narrow space which the top of the cliff afforded (very like a fellow at a country fair dancing upon a trencher), he roared for mercy in Gaelic and English alternately, according to the side on which the scale of victory seemed to predominate, while his exclamations were only answered by the groans of the Bailie, who suffered much, not only from apprehension, but from the pendulous posture in which he hung suspended by the loins.

On perceiving the Bailie's precarious situation, my first idea was to attempt to render him assistance; but this was impossible without the concurrence of Andrew, whom neither sign, nor entreaty, nor command, nor expostulation could inspire with courage to adventure the descent from his painful elevation, where, like an unskilful and obnoxious minister of state, unable to escape from the eminence to which he had presumptuously ascended, he continued to pour fourth piteous prayers for mercy, which no one heard, and to skip to and fro, writhing his body into all possible antick shapes to avoid the balls which he conceived to be whistling around him.

In a few minutes this cause of terror ceased, for the fire, at first so well sustained, now sunk at once, a sure sign that the conflict was concluded. To gain some spot from which I could see how the day had gone was now my object, in order to appeal to the mercy of the victors, who, I trusted (whichever side might be gainers), would not suffer the honest Bailie to remain

suspended, like the coffin of Mahomet, between heaven and earth without lending a hand to disengage him. At length, by dint of scrambling, I found a spot which commanded a view of the field of battle. It was indeed ended; and, as my mind already augured, from the place and circumstances attending the contest, it had terminated in the defeat of Captain Thornton. I saw a party of Highlanders in the act of disarming that officer and the scanty remainder of his party. They consisted of about twelve men, most of whom were wounded, who, surrounded by treble their number, and without the power either to advance or retreat, exposed to a murderous and well-aimed fire, which they had no means of returning with effect, had at length laid down their arms by the order of their officer, when he saw that the road in his rear was occupied, and that protracted resistance would be only wasting the lives of his brave followers. By the Highlanders, who fought under cover, the victory was cheaply bought, at the expense of one man slain and two wounded by the grenades. All this I learned afterwards. At present I only comprehended the general result of the day from seeing the English officer, whose face was covered with blood, stripped of his hat and arms, and his men, with sullen and dejected countenances, which marked their deep regret, enduring, from the wild and martial figures who surrounded them, the severe measures to which the laws of war subject the vanquished for security of the victors.

CHAPTER XXXI

'Woe to the vanquish'd!' was stern Brenno's word,
When sunk proud Rome beneath the Gallic sword —
'Woe to the vanquish'd!' when his massive blade
Bore down the scale against her ransom weigh'd;
And on the field of foughten battle still
Woe knows no limit save the victor's will.

The Gaulliad.

I ANXIOUSLY endeavoured to distinguish Dougal among the victors. I had little doubt that the part he had played was assumed on purpose to lead the English officer into the defile, and I could not help admiring the address with which the ignorant and apparently half-brutal savage had veiled his purpose, and the affected reluctance with which he had suffered to be extracted from him the false information which it must have been his purpose from the beginning to communicate. I foresaw we should incur some danger on approaching the victors in the first flush of their success, which was not unstained with cruelty, for one or two of the soldiers, whose wounds prevented them from rising, were poniarded by the victors, or rather by some ragged Highland boys who had mingled with them. I concluded, therefore, it would be unsafe to present ourselves without some mediator; and as Campbell, whom I now could not but identify with the celebrated freebooter Rob Roy, was nowhere to be seen, I resolved to claim the protection of his emissary, Dougal.

After gazing everywhere in vain, I at length retraced my steps to see what assistance I could individually render to my unlucky friend, when to my great joy I saw Mr. Jarvie delivered from his state of suspense; and, though very black in the face, and much deranged in the garments, safely seated beneath the rock in front of which he had been so lately suspended. I hastened to join him and offer my congratulations, which he was at first far from receiving in the spirit of cordiality

with which they were offered. A heavy fit of coughing scarce permitted him breath enough to express the broken hints which he threw out against my sincerity.

'Uh! uh! uh! uh! They say a friend — uh! uh! — a friend sticketh closer than a brither — uh! uh! uh! When I came up here, Maister Osbaldistone, to this country, cursed of God and man — uh! uh! — Heaven forgie me for swearing — on nae man's errand but yours, d'ye think it was fair — uh! uh! — to leave me, first, to be shot or drowned atween red-wud Highlanders and redcoats; and next, to be hung up between heaven and earth, like an auld potato-bogle, without sae muckle as trying — uh! uh! — sae muckle as trying to relieve me?'

I made a thousand apologies, and laboured so hard to represent the impossibility of my affording him relief by my own unassisted exertions that at length I succeeded, and the Bailie, who was as placable as hasty in his temper, extended his favour to me once more. I next took the liberty of asking him how he had contrived to extricate himself.

'Me extricate! I might hae hung there tll the day of judgment, or I could hae helped mysell, wi' my head hinging down on the tae side and my heels on the tother, like the yarn scales in the weigh-house. It was the creature Dougal that extricated me, as he did yestreen; he cuttit aff the tails o' my coat wi' his durk, and another gillie and him set me on my legs as cleverly as if I had never been aff them. But to see what a thing gude braid-claith is: had I been in ony o' your rotten French camlets now, or your *drap de Berries*, it would hae screeded like an auld rag wi' sic a weight as mine. But fair fa' the weaver that wrought the weft o't. I swung and bobbit yonder as safe as a gabbart that's moored by a three-ply cable at the Broomielaw.'

I now inquired what had become of his preserver.

'The creature,' so he continued to call the Highlandman, 'contrived to let me ken there wad be danger in gaun near the ledly till he came back, and bade me stay here. I am o' the mind,' he continued, 'that he's seeking after you, it's a considerate creature; and troth, I wad swear he was right about the ledly, as he ca's her, too. Helen Campbell was nane o' the maist douce maidens, nor meekest wives neither, and folk say that Rob him — stands in awe o' her. I doubt she winna ken me, for it's many years since we met; I am clear for waiting for the Dougal creature or we gang near her.'

I signified my acquiescence in this reasoning; but it was not

the will of fate that day that the Bailie's prudence should profit himself or any one else.

Andrew Fairservice, though he had ceased to caper on the pinnacle upon the cessation of the firing which had given occasion for his whimsical exercise, continued, as perched on the top of an exposed cliff, too conspicuous an object to escape the sharp eyes of the Highlanders when they had time to look a little around them. We were apprised he was discovered by a wild and loud halloo set up among the assembled victors, three or four of whom instantly plunged into the copse-wood and ascended the rocky side of the hill in different directions towards the place where they had discovered this whimsical apparition.

Those who arrived first within gunshot of poor Andrew did not trouble themselves to offer him any assistance in the ticklish posture of his affairs, but, levelling their long Spanish-barrelled guns, gave him to understand by signs which admitted of no misconstruction that he must contrive to come down and submit himself to their mercy, or be marked at from beneath, like a regimental target set up for ball-practice. With such a formidable hint for venturous exertion, Andrew Fairservice could no longer hesitate; the more imminent peril overcame his sense of that which seemed less inevitable, and he began to descend the cliff at all risks, clutching to the ivy and oak stumps and projecting fragments of rock with an almost feverish anxiety, and never failing, as circumstances left him a hand at liberty, to extend it to the plaided gentry below in an attitude of supplication, as if to deprecate the discharge of their levelled firearms. In a word, the fellow, under the influence of a counteracting motive for terror, achieved a safe descent from his perilous eminence, which, I verily believe, nothing but fear of instant death could have moved him to attempt. The awkward mode of Andrew's descent greatly amused the Highlanders below, who fired a shot or two while he was engaged in it, without the purpose of injuring him, as I believe, but merely to enhance the amusement they derived from his extreme terror, and the superlative exertions of agility to which it excited him.

At length he attained firm and comparatively level ground, or rather, to speak more correctly, his foot slipping at the last point of descent, he fell on the earth at his full length, and was raised by the assistance of the Highlanders, who stood to receive him, and who, ere he gained his legs, stripped him not only of

the whole contents of his pockets, but of periwig, hat, coat, doublet, stockings, and shoes, performing the feat with such admirable celerity that, although he fell on his back a well-clothed and decent burgher-seeming serving-man, he arose a forked, uncased, bald-pated, beggarly-looking scarecrow. Without respect to the pain which his undefended toes experienced from the sharp encounter of the rocks over which they hurried him, those who had detected Andrew proceeded to drag him downward towards the road through all the intervening obstacles.

In the course of their descent Mr. Jarvie and I became exposed to their lynx-eyed observation, and instantly half a dozen armed Highlanders thronged around us, with drawn dirks and swords pointed at our faces and throats, and cocked pistols presented against our bodies. To have offered resistance would have been madness, especially as we had no weapons capable of supporting such a demonstration. We therefore submitted to our fate; and, with great roughness on the part of those who assisted at our toilette, were in the act of being reduced to as unsophisticated a state (to use King Lear's phrase) as the plumeless biped Andrew Fairservice, who stood shivering between fear and cold at a few yards' distance. Good chance, however, saved us from this extremity of wretchedness; for, just as I had yielded up my cravat (a smart Steinkirk, by the way, and richly laced), and the Bailie had been disrobed of the fragments of his riding-coat, enter Dougal, and the scene was changed. By a high tone of expostulation, mixed with oaths and threats, as far as I could conjecture the tenor of his language from the violence of his gestures, he compelled the plunderers, however reluctant, not only to give up their further depredations on our property, but to restore the spoil they had already appropriated. He snatched my cravat from the fellow who had seized it, and twisted it (in the zeal of his restitution) around my neck with such suffocating energy as made me think that he had not only been, during his residence at Glasgow, a substitute of the jailor, but must moreover have taken lessons as an apprentice of the hangman. He flung the tattered remnants of Mr. Jarvie's coat around his shoulders, and, as more Highlanders began to flock towards us from the highroad, he led the way downwards, directing and commanding the others to afford us, but particularly the Bailie, the assistance necessary to our descending with comparative ease and safety. It was, however, in vain that Andrew Fairservice

employed his lungs in obsecrating a share of Dougal's protection, or at least his interference, to procure restoration of his shoes.

'Na, na,' said Dougal in reply, 'she's nae gentle body, I trow; her petters hae ganged parefoot, or she's muckle mista'en.' And, leaving Andrew to follow at his leisure, or rather at such leisure as the surrounding crowd were pleased to indulge him with, he hurried us down to the pathway in which the skirmish had been fought, and hastened to present us as additional captives to the female leader of his band.

We were dragged before her accordingly, Dougal fighting, struggling, screaming, as if he were the party most apprehensive of hurt, and repulsing, by threats and efforts, all those who attempted to take a nearer interest in our capture than he seemed to do himself. At length we were placed before the heroine of the day, whose appearance, as well as those of the savage, uncouth, yet martial figures who surrounded us, struck me, to own the truth, with considerable apprehension. I do not know if Helen MacGregor had personally mingled in the fray, and indeed I was afterwards given to understand the contrary; but the specks of blood on her brow, her hands, and naked arms, as well as on the blade of the sword which she continued to hold in her hand, her flushed countenance, and the disordered state of the raven locks which escaped from under the red bonnet and plume that formed her head-dress, seemed all to intimate that she had taken an immediate share in the conflict. Her keen black eyes and features expressed an imagination inflamed by the pride of gratified revenge and the triumph of victory. Yet there was nothing positively sanguinary or cruel in her deportment; and she reminded me, when the immediate alarm of the interview was over, of some of the paintings I had seen of the inspired heroines in the Catholic churches of France. She was not, indeed, sufficiently beautiful for a Judith, nor had she the inspired expression of features which painters have given to Deborah, or to the wife of Heber the Kenite, at whose feet the strong oppressor of Israel, who dwelled in Harosheth of the Gentiles, bowed down, fell, and lay a dead man. Nevertheless, the enthusiasm by which she was agitated gave her countenance and deportment, wildly dignified in themselves, an air which made her approach nearly to the ideas of those wonderful artists who gave to the eye the heroines of Scripture history.

I was uncertain in what terms to accost a personage so un-

common, when Mr. Jarvie, breaking the ice with a preparatory cough (for the speed with which he had been brought into her presence had again impeded his respiration), addressed her as follows: 'Uh! uh! etc. etc. I am very happy to have this joyful opportunity (a quaver in his voice strongly belied the emphasis which he studiously laid on the word joyful) — this joyful occasion,' he resumed, trying to give the adjective a more suitable accentuation, 'to wish my kinsman Robin's wife a very good morning. Uh! uh! How's a' wi' ye' — by this time he had talked himself into his usual jog-trot manner, which exhibited a mixture of familiarity and self-importance — 'how's a' wi' ye this lang time? Ye'll hae forgotten me, Mrs. MacGregor Campbell, as your cousin — uh! uh! — but ye'll mind my father, Deacon Nicol Jarvie, in the Saut Market o' Glasgow' — an honest man he was, and a sponable, and respectit you and yours. Sae, as I said before, I am right glad to see you, Mrs. MacGregor Campbell, as my kinsman's wife. I wad crave the liberty of a kinsman to salute you, but that your gillies keep such a dolefu' fast hand o' my arms; and, to speak Heaven's truth and a magistrate's, ye wadna be the waur of a cogin' o' water before ye welcomed your friends.'

There was something in the familiarity of this introduction which ill suited the exalted state of temper of the person to whom it was addressed, then busied with distributing dooms of death, and warm from conquest in a perilous encounter.

'What fellow are you,' she said, 'that dare to claim kindred with the MacGregor, and neither wear his dress nor speak his language? What are you, that have the tongue and the habit of the hound, and yet seek to lie down with the deer?'

'I dinna ken,' said the undaunted Bailie, 'if the kindred has ever been weel redd out to you yet, cousin; but it's kend and can be proved. My mother, Elspeth MacFarlane, was the wife of my father, Deacon Nicol Jarvie — peace be wi' them baith — and Elspeth was the daughter of Parlane MacFarlane, at the Sheeling o' Loch Sloy. Now this Parlane MacFarlane, as his surviving daughter, Maggy MacFarlane, *alias* MacNab, wha married Duncan MacNab o' Stuckavallachan, can testify, stood as near to your gudeman, Robin MacGregor, as in the fourth degree of kindred, for —'

The virago lopped the genealogical tree by demanding haughtily, 'If a stream of rushing water acknowledged any relation with the portion withdrawn from it for the mean domestic uses of those who dwelt on its banks?'

'Vern true, kinswoman,' said the Bailie; 'but for a' that the burn wad be glad to hae the mill-dam back again in simmer, when the chuckie stanes are white in the sun. I ken weel enough you Highland folk haud us Glasgow people light and cheap for our language and our claes; but every body speaks their native tongue that they learned in infancy; and it would be a daft-like thing to see me wi' my fat wame in a short Highland coat, and my puir short boughs gartered below the knee, like ane o' your lang-legged gillies. Mair by token, kinswoman,' he continued, in defiance of various intimations by which Dougal seemed to recommend silence, as well as of the marks of impatience which the amazon evinced at his loquacity, 'I wad hae ye to mind that the king's errand whiles comes in the cudger's gate, and that, for as high as ye may think o' the gude-man, as it's right every wife should honour her husband — there's Scripture warrant for that — yet as high as ye haud him, as I was saying, I hae been serviceable to Rob ere now; forbye a set o' pearlines I sent yoursell when ye was gaun to be married, and when Rob was an honest weel-doing drover, and nane o' this unlawfu' wark, wi' fighting, and flashes, and flut-gibs, disturbing the king's peace and disarming his soldiers.'

He had apparently touched on a key which his kinswoman could not brook. She drew herself up to her full height, and betrayed the acuteness of her feelings by a laugh of mingled scorn and bitterness.

'Yes,' she said, 'you, and such as you, might claim a relation to us when we stooped to be the poltry wretches fit to exist under your dominion, as you — drawers of wood and drawers of water — to find cattle for your banquets, and subjects for your laws to oppress and trample on. But now we are free — free by the very act which left us neither horse nor hearth, food nor covering, which bereaved me o' a' — of all, and makes me groan when I think I must still cumber the earth for other purposes than those of vengeance. And I will carry on the work this day has so well commenced by a deed that shall break all bands between MacGregor and the Lowland churls. Here, Allan, Dougal, bind these Sassenachs neck and heel together and throw them into the Highland loch to seek for their Highland kinsfolk.'

The Bailie, alarmed at this mandate, was commencing an expostulation, which probably would have only inflamed the violent passions of the person whom he addressed, when Dougal threw himself between them, and in his own language, which

he spoke with a fluency and rapidity strongly contrasted by the slow, imperfect, and idiot-like manner in which he expressed himself in English, poured forth what I doubt not was a very animated pleading in our behalf.

His mistress replied to him, or rather cut short his harangue, by exclaiming in English (as if determined to make us taste in anticipation the full bitterness of death), 'Base dog, and son of a dog, do you dispute my commands? Should I tell ye to cut out their tongues and put them into each other's throats, to try which would there best knap Southron, or to tear out their hearts and put them into each other's breasts, to see which would there best plot treason against the MacGregor — and such things have been done of old in the day of revenge, when our fathers had wrongs to redress — should I command you to do this, would it be your part to dispute my orders?'

'To be sure, to be sure,' Dougal replied, with accents of profound submission; 'her pleasure suld be done, tat's but reason; but an it were — tat is, an it could be thought the same to her to coup the ill-faured loon of ta redcoat Captain, and hims corporal Cramp, and twa three o' the redcoats into the loch, hersell wad do't wi' muckle mair great satisfaction than to hurt ta honest civil shentlemans as were friends to the Gregarach, and came up on the Chief's assurance, and not to do no treason, as hersell could testify.'

The lady was about to reply, when a few wild strains of a pibroch were heard advancing up the road from Aberfoil, the same probably which had reached the ears of Captain Thornton's rear-guard, and determined him to force his way onward rather than return to the village, on finding the pass occupied. The skirmish being of very short duration, the armed men who followed this martial melody had not, although quickening their march when they heard the firing, been able to arrive in time sufficient to take any share in the *rencontre*. The victory, therefore, was complete without them, and they now arrived only to share in the triumph of their countrymen.

There was a marked difference betwixt the appearance of these new comers and that of the party by which our escort had been defeated, and it was greatly in favour of the former. Among the Highlanders who surrounded the Chieftainess, if I may presume to call her so without offence to grammar, were men in the extremity of age, boys scarce able to bear a sword, and even women — all, in short, whom the last necessity urges to take up arms; and it added a shade of bitter shame to the

dejection which clouded Thornton's manly countenance, when he found that the numbers and position of a foe, otherwise so despicable, had enabled them to conquer his brave veterans. But the thirty or forty Highlanders who now joined the others were all men in the prime of youth or manhood, active clean-made fellows, whose short hose and belted plaids set out their sinewy limbs to the best advantage. Their arms were as superior to those of the first party as their dress and appearance. The followers of the female Chief had axes, scythes, and other antique weapons, in aid of their guns, and some had only clubs, daggers, and long knives. But of the second party most had pistols at the belt, and almost all had dirks hanging at the pouches which they wore in front. Each had a good gun in his hand and a broadsword by his side, besides a stout round target, made of light wood, covered with leather and curiously studded with brass, and having a steel pike screwed into the centre. These hung on their left shoulder during a march, or while they were engaged in exchanging fire with the enemy, and were worn on the left arm when they charged with sword in hand.

But it was easy to see that this chosen band had not arrived from a victory such as they found their ill-appointed companions possessed of. The pibroch sent forth occasionally a few wailing notes, expressive of a very different sentiment from triumph, and when they appeared before the wife of their Chieftain it was in silence, and with downcast and melancholy looks. They paused when they approached her, and the pipes again sent forth the same wild and melancholy strain.

Helen rushed towards them with a countenance in which anger was mingled with apprehension. 'What means this, Allaster?' she said to the minstrel. 'Why a lament in the moment of victory? Robert — Hannish — where's the Mac-Gregor? where's your father?'

Her sons, who led the band, advanced with slow and irresolute steps towards her, and murmured a few words in Gaelic, at hearing which she set up a shriek that made the rocks ring again, in which all the women and boys joined, clapping their hands and yelling, as if their lives had been expiring in the sound. The mountain echoes, silent since the military sounds of battle had ceased, had now to answer these frantic and discordant shrieks of sorrow, which drove the very night-birds from their haunts in the rocks, as if they were

startled to hear orgies more hideous and ill-omened than their own, performed in the face of open day.

'Taken!' repeated Helen, when the clamour had subsided — 'taken! captive! and you live to say so? Coward dogs! did I nurse you for this, that you should spare your blood on your father's enemies? or see him prisoner, and come back to tell it?'

The sons of MacGregor, to whom this expostulation was addressed, were youths, of whom the eldest had hardly attained his twentieth year. Hamish, or James, the elder of these youths, was the tallest by a head, and much handsomer than his brother; his light blue eyes, with a profusion of fair hair, which streamed from under his smart blue bonnet, made his whole appearance a most favourable specimen of the Highland youth. The younger was called Robert; but, to distinguish him from his father, the Highlanders added the epithet 'Oig' or the young. Dark hair, and dark features, with a ruddy glow of health and animation, and a form strong and well-set beyond his years, completed the sketch of the young mountaineer.

Both now stood before their mother with countenances clouded with grief and shame, and listened with the most respectful submission to the reproaches with which she loaded them. At length, when her resentment appeared in some degree to subside, the eldest, speaking in English, probably that he might not be understood by their followers, endeavoured respectfully to vindicate himself and his brother from his mother's reproaches. I was so near him as to comprehend much of what he said; and, as it was of great consequence to me to be possessed of information in this strange crisis, I failed not to listen as attentively as I could.

'The MacGregor,' his son stated, 'had been called out upon a trysting with a Lowland hallion, who came with a token from —' he muttered the name very low, but I thought it sounded like my own. 'The MacGregor,' he said, 'accepted of the invitation, but commanded the Saxon who brought the message to be detained, as a hostage that good faith should be observed to him. Accordingly he went to the place of appointment (which had some wild Highland name that I cannot remember), attended only by Angus Breck and little Rory, commanding no one to follow him. Within half an hour Angus Breck came back with the doleful tidings that the MacGregor had been surprised and made prisoner by a party of Lennox militia, under Galbraith of Garschattachin.' He added, 'that Galbraith,

on being threatened by MacGregor, who, upon his capture, menaced him with retaliation on the person of the hostage, had treated the threat with great contempt, replying, "Let each side hang his man; we'll hang the thief, and your catherans may hang the gauger, Rob, and the country will be rid of two damned things at once, a wild Highlander and a revenue officer." Angus Breck, less carefully looked to than his master, contrived to escape from the hands of the captors, after having been in their custody long enough to hear this discussion and to bring off the news.

'And did you learn this, you false-hearted traitor,' said the wife of MacGregor, 'and not instantly rush to your father's rescue to bring him off, or leave your body on the place?'

The young MacGregor modestly replied, by representing the very superior force of the enemy, and stated that, as they made no preparation for leaving the country, he had fallen back up the glen with the purpose of collecting a band sufficient to attempt a rescue with some tolerable chance of success. At length he said, 'The militiamen would quarter, he understood, in the neighbouring house of Gartartan, or the old castle in the Port of Menteith, or some other stronghold, which, although strong and defensible, was nevertheless capable of being surprised, could they but get enough of men assembled for the purpose.'

I understood afterwards that the rest of the freebooter's followers were divided into two strong bands, one destined to watch the remaining garrison of Inversnaid, a party of which, under Captain Thornton, had been defeated; and another to show front to the Highland clans who had united with the regular troops and Lowlanders in this hostile and combined invasion of that mountainous and desolate territory, which, lying between the lakes of Loch Lomond, Loch Katrine, and Loch Ard, was at this time currently called Rob Roy's or the MacGregor country. Messengers were despatched in great haste, to concentrate, as I supposed, their forces, with a view to the purposed attack on the Lowlanders; and the dejection and despair at first visible on each countenance gave place to the hope of rescuing their leader, and to the thirst of vengeance. It was under the burning influence of the latter passion that the wife of MacGregor commanded that the hostage exchanged for his safety should be brought into her presence. I believe her sons had kept this unfortunate wretch out of her sight for fear of the consequences; but if it was so, their humane precaution only postponed his fate. They dragged forward at

her summons a wretch already half dead with terror, in whose agonised features I recognised, to my horror and astonishment, my old acquaintance Morris.

He fell prostrate before the female Chief with an effort to clasp her knees, from which she drew back, as if his touch had been pollution, so that all he could do in token of the extremity of his humiliation was to kiss the hem of her plaid. I never heard entreaties for life poured forth with such agony of spirit. The ecstasy of fear was such that, instead of paralysing his tongue, as on ordinary occasions, it even rendered him eloquent; and, with cheeks pale as ashes, hands compressed in agony, eyes that seemed to be taking their last look of all mortal objects, he protested, with the deepest oaths, his total ignorance of any design on the person of Rob Roy, whom he swore he loved and honoured as his own soul. In the inconsistency of his terror he said he was but the agent of others, and he muttered the name of Rashleigh. He prayed but for life, for life he would give all he had in the world; it was but life he asked — life, if it were to be prolonged under tortures and privations; he asked only breath, though it should be drawn in the damp of the lowest caverns of their hills.

It is impossible to describe the scorn, the loathing, and contempt with which the wife of MacGregor regarded this wretched petitioner for the poor boon of existence.

'I could have bid you live,' she said, 'had life been to you the same weary and wasting burden that it is to me — that it is to every noble and generous mind. But you — wretch! you could creep through the world unaffected by its various disgraces, its ineffable miseries, its constantly accumulating masses of crime and sorrow; you could live and enjoy yourself while the noble-minded are betrayed, while nameless and birthless villains tread on the neck of the brave and the long-descended; you could enjoy yourself, like a butcher's dog in the shambles, batten on garbage, while the slaughter of the oldest and best went on around you! This enjoyment you shall not live to partake of; you shall die, base dog, and that before you cloud has passed over the sun.'

She gave a brief command in Gaelic to her attendants, two of whom seized upon the prostrate suppliant and hurried him to the brink of a cliff which overhung the flood. He set up the most piercing and dreadful cries that fear ever uttered: I may well term them dreadful, for they haunted my sleep for years afterwards. As the murderers, or executioners, call them as

you will, dragged him along, he recognised me even in that moment of horror, and exclaimed, in the last articulate words I ever heard him utter, 'O, Mr. Osbaldistone, save me! save me!'

I was so much moved by this horrid spectacle that, although in momentary expectation of sharing his fate, I did attempt to speak in his behalf, but, as might have been expected, my interference was sternly disregarded. The victim was held fast by some, while others, binding a large heavy stone in a plaid, tied it round his neck, and others again eagerly stripped him of some part of his dress. Half-naked, and thus manacled, they hurled him into the lake, there about twelve feet deep, with a loud halloo of vindictive triumph, above which, however, his last death-shriek, the yell of mortal agony, was distinctly heard. The heavy burden splashed in the dark blue waters, and the Highlanders, with their pole-axes and swords, watched an instant, to guard lest, extricating himself from the load to which he was attached, the victim might have struggled to regain the shore. But the knot had been securely bound; the wretched man sunk without effort; the waters, which his fall had disturbed, settled calmly over him, and the unit of that life for which he had pleaded so strongly was for ever withdrawn from the sum of human existence.

CHAPTER XXXII

And be he safe restored ere evening set,
Or, if there's vengeance in an injured heart,
And power to wreak it in an armed hand,
Your land shall ache for't.

Old Play.

I KNOW not why it is that a single deed of violence and cruelty affects our nerves more than when these are exercised on a more extended scale. I had seen that day several of my brave countrymen fall in battle; it seemed to me that they met a lot appropriate to humanity, and my bosom, though thrilling with interest, was affected with nothing of that sickening horror with which I beheld the unfortunate Morris put to death without resistance and in cold blood. I looked at my companion, Mr. Jarvie, whose face reflected the feelings which were painted in mine. Indeed, he could not so suppress his horror but that the words escaped him in a low and broken whisper—

'I take up my protest against this deed, as a bloody and cruel murder: it is a cursed deed, and God will avenge it in His due way and time.'

'Then you do not fear to follow?' said the virago, bending on him a look of death such as that with which a hawk looks at his prey ere he pounces.

'Kinswoman,' said the Bailie, 'nae man willingly wad cut short his thread of life before the end o' his pirn was fairly measured off on the yarn-winnles. And I hae muckle to do, an I be spared, in this warld—public and private business, as weel that belonging to the magistracy as to my ain particular: and nae doubt I hae some to depend on me, as puir Mattie, wha is an orphan. She's a far-awa' cousin o' the Laird o' Limmerfield. Sae that, laying a' this thegither—"skin for skin, yea all that a man hath will he give for his life."'

'And were I to set you at liberty,' said the imperious dame, 'what name would you give to the drowning of that Saxon dog?'

'Uh! uh! — hem! hem!' said the Bailie, clearing his throat as well as he could, 'I suld study to say as little on that score as might be; least said is sunest mended.'

'But if you were called on by the courts, as you term them, of justice,' she again demanded, 'what then would be your answer?'

The Bailie looked this way and that way, like a person who meditates an escape, and then answered in the tone of one who, seeing no means of accomplishing a retreat, determines to stand the brunt of battle — 'I see what you are driving me to the wa' about. But I'll tell you 't plain, kinswoman, I behoved just to speak according to my ain conscience; and though your ain gudeman, that I wish had been here for his ain sake and mine, as weel as the puir Hieland creature Dougal, can tell ye that Nicol Jarvie can wink as hard at a friend's failings as ony body, yet I'se tell ye, kinswoman, mine's ne'er be the tongue to belie my thought; and sooner than say that yonder puir wretch was lawfully slaughtered, I wad consent to be laid beside him, though I think ye are the first Hieland woman wad mint sic a doom to her husband's kinsman but four times removed.'

It is probable that the tone of firmness assumed by the Bailie in his last speech was better suited to make an impression on the hard heart of his kinswoman than the tone of supplication he had hitherto assumed, as gems can be cut with steel, though they resist softer metals. She commanded us both to be placed before her. 'Your name,' she said to me, 'is Osbaldistone? The dead dog, whose death you have witnessed, called you so.'

'My name *is* Osbaldistone,' was my answer.

'Rashleigh, then, I suppose, is your Christian name?' she pursued.

'No; my name is Francis.'

'But you know Rashleigh Osbaldistone?' she continued. 'He is your brother, if I mistake not, at least your kinsman and near friend.'

'He is my kinsman,' I replied, 'but not my friend. We were lately engaged together in a *rencontre*, when we were separated by a person whom I understand to be your husband. My blood is hardly yet dried on his sword, and the wound on my side is yet green. I have little reason to acknowledge him as a friend.'

'Then,' she replied, 'if a stranger to his intrigues, you can go in safety to Garschattachin and his party, without fear of being

detained, and carry them a message from the wife of the MacGregor !'

I answered, 'That I knew no reasonable cause why the militia gentlemen should detain me ; that I had no reason, on my own account, to fear being in their hands ; and that if my going on her embassy would act as a protection to my friend and servant, who were her prisoners, I was ready to set out directly.' I took the opportunity to say, 'That I had come into this country on her husband's invitation, and his assurance that he would aid me in some important matters in which I was interested ; that my companion, Mr. Jarvie, had accompanied me on the same errand.'

'And I wish Mr. Jarvie's boots had been fu' o' boiling water when he drew them on for sic a purpose,' interrupted the Bailie.

'You may read your father,' said Helen MacGregor, turning to her sons, 'in what this young Saxon tells us. Wise only when the bonnet is on his head and the sword is in his hand, he never exchanges the tartan for the broadcloth but he runs himself into the miserable intrigues of the Lowlanders, and becomes again, after all he has suffered, their agent — their tool — their slave.'

'Add, madam,' said I, 'and their benefactor.'

'Be it so,' she said ; 'for it is the most empty title of them all, since he has uniformly sown benefits to reap a harvest of the most foul ingratitude. But enough of this. I shall cause you to be guided to the enemy's outposts ; ask for their commander, and deliver him this message from me, Helen MacGregor : That if they injure a hair of MacGregor's head, and if they do not set him at liberty within the space of twelve hours, there is not a lady in the Lennox but shall before Christmas cry the coronach for them she will be loth to lose ; there is not a farmer but shall sing wellawa over a burnt barnyard and an empty byre ; there is not a laird nor heritor shall lay his head on the pillow at night with the assurance of being a live man in the morning ; and, to begin as we are to end, so soon as the term is expired I will send them this Glasgow Bailie and this Saxon Captain, and all the rest of my prisoners, each bundled in a plaid, and chopped into as many pieces as there are checks in the tartan.'

As she paused in her denunciation, Captain Thornton, who was within hearing, added with great coolness, 'Present my compliments — Captain Thornton's, of the Royals, compliments

—to the commanding officer, and tell him to do his duty and secure his prisoner, and not waste a thought upon me. If I have been fool enough to have been led into an ambuscade by these artful savages, I am wise enough to know how to die for it without disgracing the service. I am only sorry for my poor fellows,' he said, 'that have fallen into such butcherly hands.'

'Whisht! whisht!' exclaimed the Bailie; 'are ye weary o' your life? Ye'll gie *my* service to the commanding officer, Mr. Osbaldistone — Bailie Nicol Jarvie's service, a magistrate o' Glasgow, as his father the deacon was before him — and tell him, here are a wheen honest men in great trouble, and like to come to mair; and the best thing he can do for the common good will be just to let Rob come his wa's up the glen, and nae mair about it. There's been some ill dune here already, but as it has lighted chiefly on the gauger, it winna be muckle worth making a stir about.'

With these very opposite injunctions from the parties chiefly interested in the success of my embassy, and with the reiterated charge of the wife of MacGregor to remember and detail every word of her injunctions, I was at length suffered to depart; and Andrew Fairservice, chiefly, I believe, to get rid of his clamorous supplications, was permitted to attend me. Doubtful, however, that I might use my horse as a means of escape from my guides, or desirous to retain a prize of some value, I was given to understand that I was to perform my journey on foot, escorted by Hamish MacGregor, the elder brother, who, with two followers, attended, as well to show me the way as to reconnoitre the strength and position of the enemy. Dougal had been at first ordered on this party, but he contrived to elude the service, with the purpose, as we afterwards understood, of watching over Mr. Jarvie, whom, according to his wild principles of fidelity, he considered as entitled to his good offices, from having once acted in some measure as his patron or master.

After walking with great rapidity about an hour, we arrived at an eminence covered with brushwood, which gave us a commanding prospect down the valley, and a full view of the post which the militia occupied. Being chiefly cavalry, they had judiciously avoided any attempt to penetrate the pass which had been so unsuccessfully assayed by Captain Thornton. They had taken up their situation with some military skill on a rising ground in the centre of the little valley of Aberfoil, through which the river Forth winds its earliest course, and

which is formed by two ridges of hills, faced with barricades of limestone rock, intermixed with huge masses of breccia, or pebbles imbedded in some softer substance which has hardened around them like mortar, and surrounded by the more lofty mountains in the distance. These ridges, however, left the valley of breadth enough to secure the cavalry from any sudden surprise by the mountaineers, and they had stationed sentinels and outposts at proper distances from this main body in every direction, so that they might secure full time to mount and get under arms upon the least alarm. It was not indeed expected at that time that Highlanders would attack cavalry in an open plain, though late events have shown that they may do so with success.¹ When I first knew the Highlanders they had almost a superstitious dread of a mounted trooper, the horse being so much more fierce and imposing in his appearance than the little shelties of their own hills, and moreover being trained as the more ignorant mountaineers believed, to fight with his feet and his teeth.

The appearance of the picqueted horses feeding in this little vale; the forms of the soldiers, as they sate, stood, or walked in various groups in the vicinity of the beautiful river; and of the bare yet romantic ranges of rock which hedge in the landscape on either side, formed a noble foreground, while far to the eastward the eye caught a glance of the lake of Menteith; and Stirling Castle, dimly seen along with the blue and distant line of the Ochil Mountains, closed the scene.

After gazing on this landscape with great earnestness, young MacGregor intimated to me that I was to descend to the station of the militia and execute my errand to their commander, enjoining me at the same time, with a menacing gesture, neither to inform them who had guided me to that place nor where I had parted from my escort. Thus tutored, I descended towards the military post, followed by Andrew, who, only retaining his breeches and stockings of the English costume, without a hat, bare-legged, with brogues on his feet, which Dougal had given him out of compassion, and having a tattered plaid to supply the want of all upper garments, looked as if he had been playing the part of a Highland Tom-of-Beilam. We had not proceeded far before we became visible to one of the videttes, who, riding towards us, presented his carabine and commanded me to stand. I obeyed, and when the soldier came

¹ The affairs of Prestonpans and Falkirk are probably alluded to, which marks the time of writing the *Memoirs* as subsequent to 1745.

up, desired to be conducted to his commanding officer. I was immediately brought where a circle of officers, sitting upon the grass, seemed in attendance upon one of superior rank. He wore a cuirass of polished steel, over which were drawn the insignia of the ancient Order of the Thistle. My friend Garschattachin and many other gentlemen, some in uniform, others in their ordinary dress, but all armed and well attended, seemed to receive their orders from this person of distinction. Many servants in rich liveries, apparently a part of his household, were also in waiting.

Having paid to this nobleman the respect which his rank appeared to demand, I acquainted him that I had been an involuntary witness to the king's soldiers having suffered a defeat from the Highlanders at the pass of Loch Ard (such I had learned was the name of the place where Mr. Thornton was made prisoner), and that the victors threatened every species of extremity to those who had fallen into their power, as well as to the Low Country in general, unless their Chief, who had that morning been made prisoner, were returned to them uninjured. The Duke, for he whom I addressed was of no lower rank, listened to me with great composure, and then replied, that he should be extremely sorry to expose the unfortunate gentlemen who had been made prisoners to the cruelty of the barbarians into whose hands they had fallen, but that it was folly to suppose that he would deliver up the very author of all these disorders and offences, and so encourage his followers in their license. 'You may return to those who sent you,' he proceeded, 'and inform them that I shall certainly cause Rob Roy Campbell, whom they call MacGregor, to be executed by break of day as an outlaw taken in arms, and deserving death by a thousand acts of violence; that I should be most justly held unworthy of my situation and commission did I act otherwise; that I shall know how to protect the country against their insolent threats of violence; and that, if they injure a hair of the head of any of the unfortunate gentlemen whom an unlucky accident has thrown into their power, I will take such ample vengeance that the very stones of their glens shall sing woe for it this hundred years to come!'

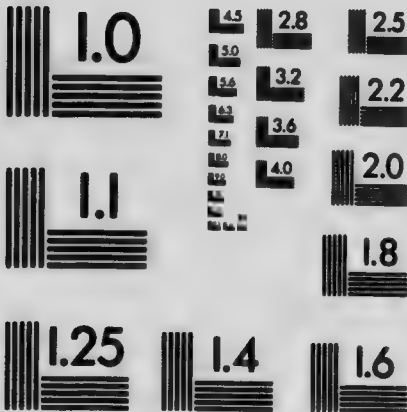
I humbly begged leave to remonstrate respecting the honourable mission imposed on me, and touched upon the obvious danger attending it, when the noble commander replied, 'that, such being the case, I might send my servant.'

'The deil be in my feet,' said Andrew, without either having



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respect to the presence in which he stood or waiting till I replied — 'the deil be in my feet if I gang my tae's length. Do the folk think I hae another thrapple in my pouch after John Highlandman's sneekit this ane wi' his joctaleg? or that I can dive down at the tae side of a Highland loch and rise at the tother, like a shelldrake? Na, na; ilk ane for himsell, and God for us a'. Folk may just mak a page o' their ain age, and serve themsells till their bairns grow up, and gang their ain errands for Andrew. Rob Roy never came near the parish of Dreepdail to steal either pippin or pear frae me or mine.'

Silencing my follower with some difficulty, I represented to the Duke the great danger Captain Thornton and Mr. Jarvie would certainly be exposed to, and entreated he would make me the bearer of such modified terms as might be the means of saving their lives. I assured him I should decline no danger if I could be of service; but, from what I had heard and seen, I had little doubt they would be instantly murdered should the chief of the outlaws suffer death.

The Duke was obviously much affected. 'It was a hard case,' he said, 'and he felt it as such; but he had a paramount duty to perform to the country: Rob Roy must die!'

I own it was not without emotion that I heard this threat of instant death to my acquaintance Campbell, who had so often testified his good-will towards me. Nor was I singular in the feeling, for many of those around the Duke ventured to express themselves in his favour. 'It would be more advisable,' they said, 'to send him to Stirling Castle, and there detain him a close prisoner, as a pledge for the submission and dispersion of his gang. It were a great pity to expose the country to be plundered, which, now that the long nights approached, it would be found very difficult to prevent, since it was impossible to guard every point, and the Highlanders were sure to select those that were left exposed.' They added, that there was great hardship in leaving the unfortunate prisoners to the almost certain doom of massacre denounced against them, which no one doubted would be executed in the first burst of revenge.

Garschattachin ventured yet farther, confiding in the honour of the nobleman whom he addressed, although he knew he had particular reasons for disliking their prisoner. 'Rob Roy,' he said, 'though a kittle neighbour to the Low Country, and particularly obnoxious to his Grace, and though he maybe carried the catheran trade farther than ony man o' his day, was an auld-ferrand carle, and there might be some means

found of making him hear reason ; whereas his wife and sons were reckless fiends, without either fear or mercy about them, and, at the head of a' his limmer loons, would be a worse plague to the country than ever he had been.'

'Pooh ! pooh !' replied his Grace, 'it is the very sense and cunning of this fellow which has so long maintained his reign ; a mere Highland robber would have been put down in as many weeks as he has flourished years. His gang, without him, is no more to be dreaded as a permanent annoyance — it will no longer exist — than a wasp without its head, which may sting once perhaps, but is instantly crushed into annihilation.'

Garschattachin was not so easily silenced. 'I am sure, my Lord Duke,' he replied, 'I have no favour for Rob, and he as little for me, seeing he has twice cleaned out my ain byres, beside skaith amang my tenants ; but, however —'

'But, however, Garschattachin,' said the Duke, with a smile of peculiar expression, 'I fancy you think such a freedom may be pardoned in a friend's friend, and Rob's supposed to be no enemy to Major Galbraith's friends over the water.'

'If it be so, my lord,' said Garschattachin, in the same tone of jocularitv, 'it's no the warst thing I have heard of him. But I wish we heard some news from the clans that we have waited for sae lang. I vow to God they'll keep a Hielandman's word wi' us ; I never kend them better, it's ill drawing boots upon trews.'

'I cannot believe it,' said the Duke ; 'these gentlemen are known to be men of honour, and I must necessarily suppose they are to keep their appointment. Send out two more horsemen to look for our friends. We cannot, till their arrival, pretend to attack the pass where Captain Thornton has suffered himself to be surprised, and which, to my knowledge, ten men on foot might make good against a regiment of the best horse in Europe. Meanwhile let refreshments be given to the men.'

I had the benefit of this last order, the more necessary and acceptable as I had tasted nothing since our hasty meal at Aberfoil the evening before. The videttes who had been despatched returned without tidings of the expected auxiliaries, and sunset was approaching when a Highlander belonging to the clans whose co-operation was expected appeared as the bearer of a letter, which he delivered to the Duke with a most profound congé.

'Now will I wad a hogshead of claret,' said Garschattachin,

'that this is a message to tell us that these cursed Highland-men, whom we have fetched here at the expense of so much plague and vexation, are going to draw off and leave us to do our own business if we can.'

'It is even so, gentlemen,' said the Duke, reddening with indignation, after having perused the letter, which was written upon a very dirty scrap of paper, but most punctiliously addressed, 'For the much-honoured hands of Ane High and Mighty Prince, the Duke,' etc. etc. etc. 'Our allies,' continued the Duke, 'have deserted us, gentlemen, and have made a separate peace with the enemy.'

'It's just the fate of all alliances,' said Garschattachin; 'the Dutch were gaun to serve us the same gate, if we had not got the start of them at Utrecht.'

'You are facetious, sir,' said the Duke, with a frown which showed how little he liked the pleasantry, 'but our business is rather of a grave cast just now. I suppose no gentleman would advise our attempting to penetrate farther into the country, unsupported either by friendly Highlanders or by infantry from Inversnaid?'

A general answer announced that the attempt would be perfect madness.

'Nor would there be great wisdom,' the Duke added, 'in remaining exposed to a night attack in this place. I therefore propose that we should retreat to the house of Duchray and that of Gartairan, and keep safe and sure watch and ward until morning. But before we separate I will examine Rob Roy before you all, and make you sensible, by your own eyes and ears, of the extreme unfitness of leaving him space for farther outrage.' He gave orders accordingly, and the prisoner was brought before him, his arms belted down above the elbow, and secured to his body by a horse-girth buckled tight behind him. Two non-commissioned officers had hold of him, one on each side, and two file of men with carabines and fixed bayonets attended for additional security.

I had never seen this man in the dress of his country, which set in a striking point of view the peculiarities of his form. A shock-head of red hair, which the hat and periwig of the Lowland costume had in a great measure concealed, was seen beneath the High and bonnet, and verified the epithet of 'Roy,' or Red, by which he was much better known in the Low Country than by any other, and is still, I suppose, best remembered. The justice of the appellation was also vindicated

by the appearance of that of his limbs from the bottom of his kilt to the top of his short hose, which the fashion of his country dress left bare, and which was covered with a fell of thick, short, red hair, especially around his knees, which resembled in this respect, as well as from their sinewy appearance of extreme strength, the limbs of a red-coloured Highland bull. Upon the whole, betwixt the effect produced by the change of dress and by my having become acquainted with his real and formidable character, his appearance had acquired to my eyes something so much wilder and more striking than it before presented, that I could scarce recognise him to be the same person.

His manner was bold, unconstrained, unless by the actual bonds, haughty, and even dignified. He bowed to the Duke, nodded to Garschattachin and others, and showed some surprise at seeing me among the party.

'It is long since we have met, Mr. Campbell,' said the Duke.

'It is so, my Lord Duke ; I could have wished it had been (looking at the fastening on his arms) when I could have better paid the compliments I owe to your Grace ; but there's a gude time coming.

'No time like the time present, Mr. Campbell,' answered the Duke, 'for the hours are fast flying that must settle your last account with all mortal affairs. I do not say this to insult your distress ; but you must be aware yourself that you draw near the end of your career. I do not deny that you may sometimes have done less harm than others of your unhappy trade, and that you may occasionally have exhibited marks of talent, and even of a disposition which promised better things. But you are aware how long you have been the terror and the oppressor of a peaceful neighbourhood, and by what acts of violence you have maintained and extended your usurped authority. You know, in short, that you have deserved death, and that you must prepare for it.'

'My lord,' said Rob Roy, 'although I may well lay my misfortunes at your Grace's door, yet I will never say that you yourself have been the wilful and witting author of them. My lord, if I had thought sae, your Grace would not this day have been sitting in judgment on me ; for you have been three times within good rifle distance of me when you were thinking but of the red deer, and few people have kend me miss my aim. But as for them that have abused your Grace's ear, and set you up against a man that was ance as peacefu' a man as ony in the

land, and made your name the warrant for driving me to utter extremity — I have had some amends of them, and, for a' that your Grace now says, I expect to live to hae mair.'

'I know,' said the Duke, in rising anger, 'that you are a determined and impudent villain, who will keep his oath if he swears to mischief; but it shall be my care to prevent you. You have no enemies but your own wicked actions.'

'Had I called myself Grahame instead of Campbell, I might have heard less about them,' answered Rob Roy, with dogged resolution.

'You will do well, sir,' said the Duke, 'to warn your wife and family and followers to beware how they use the gentlemen now in their hands, as I will requite tenfold on them and their kin and allies the slightest injury done to any of his Majesty's liege subjects.'

'My lord,' said Roy in answer, 'none of my enemies will allege that I have been a bloodthirsty man, and were I now wi' my folk I could rule four or five hundred wild Hielanders as easy as your Grace those eight or ten lackeys and foot-boys. But if your Grace is bent to take the head away from a house, ye may lay your account there will be misrule amang the members. However, come o't what like, there's an honest man, a kinsman o' my ain, maun come by nae skaith. Is there ony body here wad do a gude deed for MacGregor? he may repay it, though his hands be now tied.'

The Highlander who had delivered the letter to the Duke replied, 'I'll do your will for you, MacGregor; and I'll gang back up the glen on purpose.'

He advanced, and received from the prisoner a message to his wife, which, being in Gaelic, I did not understand, but I had little doubt it related to some measures to be taken for the safety of Mr. Jarvie.

'Do you hear the fellow's impudence?' said the Duke; 'he confides in his character of a messenger. His conduct is of a piece with his masters', who invited us to make common cause against these freebooters, and have deserted us so soon as the MacGregors have agreed to surrender the Balquidder lands they were squabbling about.'

No truth in plaids, no faith in tartan trews!
Cameleon-like, they change a thousand hues.'

'Your great ancestor never said so, my lord,' answer Major Galbraith; 'and, with submission, neither would your

Grace have occasion to say it, wad ye but be for beginning justice at the well-head. Gie the honest man his mear again. Let every head wear its ain bannet, and the distractions o' the Lennox wad be mended wi' them o' the land.'

'Hush! hush! Garschattachin,' said the Duke; 'this is language dangerous for you to talk to any one, and especially to me; but I presume you reckon yourself a privileged person. Please to draw off your party towards Gartartan; I shall myself see the prisoner escorted to Duchray, and send you orders to-morrow. You will please grant no leave of absence to any of your troopers.'

'Here's auld ordering and counter-ordering,' muttered Garschattachin between his teeth. 'But patience! patience! we may ae day play at "Change seats, the king's coming."'

The two troops of cavalry now formed, and prepared to march off the ground, that they might avail themselves of the remainder of daylight to get to their evening quarters. I received an intimation, rather than an invitation, to attend the party; and I perceived that, though no longer considered as a prisoner, I was yet under some sort of suspicion. The times were indeed so dangerous, the great party questions of Jacobite and Hanoverian divided the country so effectually, and the constant disputes and jealousies between the Highlanders and Lowlanders, besides a number of inexplicable causes of feud which separated the great leading families in Scotland from each other, occasioned such general suspicion, that a solitary and unprotected stranger was almost sure to meet with something disagreeable in the course of his travels.

I acquiesced, however, in my destination with the best grace I could, consoling myself with the hope that I might obtain from the captive freebooter some information concerning Rashleigh and his machinations. I should do myself injustice did I not add that my views were not merely selfish. I was too much interested in my singular acquaintance not to be desirous of rendering him such services as his unfortunate situation might demand, or admit of his receiving.

CHAPTER XXXIII

And when he came to broken brigg,
He bent his bow and swam;
And when he came to grass growing,
Set down his feet and ran.

Gil Morrice.

THE echoes of the rocks and ravines on either side now rang to the trumpets of the cavalry, which, forming themselves into two distinct bodies, began to move down the valley at a slow trot. That commanded by Major Galbraith soon took to the right hand and crossed the Forth, for the purpose of taking up the quarters assigned them for the night, when they were to occupy, as I understood, an old castle in the vicinity. They formed a lively object while crossing the stream, but were soon lost in winding up the bank on the opposite side, which was clothed with wood.

We continued our march with considerable good order. To ensure the safe custody of the prisoner, the Duke had caused him to be placed on horseback behind one of his retainers, called, as I was informed, Ewan of Brigglands, one of the largest and strongest men who were present. A horse-belt, passed round the bodies of both and buckled before the yeoman's breast, rendered it impossible for Rob Roy to free himself from his keeper. I was allowed to keep close beside them, and accommodated myself in the same manner with a troop-horse. We were as closely surrounded by the soldiers as the width of the road would permit, and had always at least one, if not two, on each side with pistol in hand. Andrew Fairservice, furnished with a Highland pony of which they had made prey somewhere or other, was permitted to ride among the other domestics, of whom a great number attended the line of march, though without falling into the ranks of the more regularly trained troopers.

In this manner we travelled for a certain distance, until we arrived at a place where we also were to cross the river. The

Forth, as being the outlet of a lake, is of considerable depth, even where less important in point of width, and the descent to the ford was by a broken precipitous ravine, which only permitted one horseman to descend at once. The rear and centre of our small body halting on the bank, while the front files passed down in succession, produced a considerable delay, as is usual on such occasions, and even some confusion; for a number of those riders who made no proper part of the squadron crowded to the ford without regularity, and made the militia cavalry, although tolerably well drilled, partake in some degree of their own disorder.

It was while we were thus huddled together on the bank that I heard Rob Roy whisper to the man behind whom he was placed on horseback, 'Your father, Ewan, wadna hae carried an auld friend to the shambles, like a calf, for a' the dukes in Christendom.'

Ewan returned no answer, but shrugged, as one who would express by that sign that what he was doing was none of his own choice.

'And when the MacGregors come down the glen, and ye see toom faulds, a bluidy hearthstane, and the fire flashing out between the rafters o' your house, ye may be thinking then, Ewan, that were your friend Rob to the fore, you would hae had that sae which it will make your heart sair to lose.'

Ewan of Brigglands again shrugged and groaned, but remained silent.

'It's a sair thing,' continued Rob, sliding his insinuations so gently into Ewan's ear that they reached no other but mine, who certainly saw myself in no shape called upon to destroy his prospects of escape — 'it's a sair thing that Ewan of Brigglands, whom Roy MacGregor has helped with hand, sword, and purse, suld mind a gloom from a great man mair than a friend's life.'

Ewan seemed sorely agitated, but was silent. We heard the Duke's voice from the opposite bank call, 'Bring over the prisoner.'

Ewan put his horse in motion, and just as I heard Roy say, 'Never weigh a MacGregor's bluid against a broken whang o' leather, for there will be another accounting to gie for it baith here and hereafter,' they passed me hastily, and, dashing forward rather precipitately, entered the water.

'Not yet, sir — not yet,' said some of the troopers to me, as

I was about to follow, while others pressed forward into the stream.

I saw the Duke on the other side, by the waning light, engaged in commanding his people to get into order, as they landed dispersedly, some higher, some lower. Many had crossed, some were in the water, and the rest were preparing to follow, when a sudden splash warned me that MacGregor's eloquence had prevailed on Ewan to give him freedom and a chance for life. The Duke also heard the sound, and instantly guessed its meaning. 'Dog!' he exclaimed to Ewan as he landed, 'where is your prisoner?' and, without waiting to hear the apology which the terrified vassal began to falter forth, he fired a pistol at his head, whether fatally I know not, and exclaimed, 'Gentlemen, disperse and pursue the villain. An hundred guineas for him that secures Rob Roy!'

All became an instant scene of the most lively confusion. Rob Roy, disengaged from his bonds, doubtless by Ewan's slipping the buckle of his belt, had dropped off at the horse's tail, and instantly dived, passing under the belly of the troop-horse which was on his left hand. But as he was obliged to come to the surface an instant for air, the glimpse of his tartan plaid drew the attention of the troopers, some of whom plunged into the river with a total disregard to their own safety, rushing, according to the expression of their country, through pool and stream, sometimes swimming their horses, sometimes losing them and struggling for their own lives. Others less zealous, or more prudent, broke off in different directions, and galloped up and down the banks, to watch the places at which the fugitive might possibly land. The hallooing, the whooping, the calls for aid at different points, where they saw, or conceived they saw, some vestige of him they were seeking; the frequent report of pistols and carabines, fired at every object which excited the least suspicion; the sight of so many horsemen riding about, in and out of the river, and striking with their long broadswords at whatever excited their attention, joined to the vain exertions used by their officers to restore order and regularity; and all this in so wild a scene, and visible only by the imperfect twilight of an autumn evening, made the most extraordinary hubbub I had hitherto witnessed. I was indeed left alone to observe it, for our whole cavalcade had dispersed in pursuit, or at least to see the event of the search. Indeed, as I partly suspected at the time, and afterwards learned with certainty, many of those who seemed most active in their

attempts to waylay and recover the fugitive, were, in actual truth, least desirous that he should be taken, and only joined in the cry to increase the general confusion, and to give Rob Roy a better opportunity of escaping.

Escape, indeed, was not difficult for a swimmer so expert as the freebooter, as soon as he had eluded the first burst of pursuit. At one time he was closely pressed, and several blows were made which flashed in the water around him; the scene much resembling one of the otter-hunts which I had seen at Osbaldistone Hall, where the animal is detected by the hounds from his being necessitated to put his nose above the stream to vent or breathe, while he is enabled to elude them by getting under water again so soon as he has refreshed himself by respiration. MacGregor, however, had a trick beyond the otter; for he contrived, when very closely pursued, to disengage himself unobserved from his plaid, and suffer it to float down the stream, where in its progress it quickly attracted general attention; many of the horsemen were thus put upon a false scent, and several shots or stabs were averted from the party for whom they were designed.

Once fairly out of view, the recovery of the prisoner became almost impossible, since in so many places the river was rendered inaccessible by the steepness of its banks, or the thickets of alders, poplars, and birch, which, overhanging its banks, prevented the approach of horsemen. Errors and accidents had also happened among the pursuers, whose task the approaching night rendered every moment more hopeless. Some got themselves involved in the eddies of the stream, and required the assistance of their companions to save them from drowning. Others, hurt by shots or blows in the confused mêlée, implored help or threatened vengeance, and in one or two instances such accidents led to actual strife. The trumpets, therefore, sounded the retreat, announcing that the commanding officer, with whatsoever unwillingness had for the present relinquished hopes of the important prize which had thus unexpectedly escaped his grasp, and the troops began slowly, reluctantly, and brawling with each other as they returned, again to assume their ranks. I could not but be darkening as they formed on the southern bank of the river, whose murmurs, long drowned by the louder cries of the successful pursuit, were now heard hoarsely mingling with the deep discontented, and reproachful voices of the disappointed horsemen.

Hitherto I had been as it were a mere spectator, though far

from an uninterested one, of the singular scene which had passed. But now I heard a voice suddenly exclaim, 'Where is the English stranger? It was he gave Rob Roy the knife to cut the belt.'

'Cleave the pock-pudding to the chafts!' cried one voice.

'Weize a brace of balls through his barn-pan!' said a second.

'Drive three inches of cauld airn into his breaskit!' shouted a third.

And I heard several horses galloping to and fro, with the kind purpose, doubtless, of executing these denunciations. I was immediately awakened to the sense of my situation, and to the certainty that armed men, having no restraint whatever on their irritated and inflamed passions, would probably begin by shooting or cutting me down, and afterwards investigate the justice of the action. Impressed by this belief, I leaped from my horse, and, turning him loose, plunged into a bush of alder-trees, where, considering the advancing obscurity of the night, I thought there was little chance of my being discovered. Had I been near enough to the Duke to have invoked his personal protection, I would have done so; but he had already commenced his retreat, and I saw no officer on the left bank of the river of authority sufficient to have afforded protection, in case of my surrendering myself. I thought there was no point of honour which could require, in such circumstances, an unnecessary exposure of my life. My first idea, when the tumult began to be appeased, and the clatter of the horses' feet was heard less frequently in the immediate vicinity of my hiding-place, was to seek out the Duke's quarters, when all should be quiet, and give myself up to him, as a liege subject, who had nothing to fear from his justice, and a stranger, who had every right to expect protection and hospitality. With this purpose I crept out of my hiding-place and looked around me.

The twilight had now melted nearly into darkness; few of the troopers were left on my side of the Forth, and of those who were already across it, I only heard the distant trample of the horses' feet, and the wailing and prolonged sound of their trumpets, which rung through the woods to recall stragglers. Here, therefore, I was left in a situation of considerable difficulty. I had no horse, and the deep and whirling stream of the river, rendered turbid by the late tumult of which its channel had been the scene, and seeming yet more so under the doubtful influence of an imperfect

moonlight, had no inviting influence for a pedestrian by no means accustomed to wade rivers, and who had lately seen horsemen weltering in this dangerous passage up to the very saddle-laps. At the same time my prospect, if I remained on the side of the river on which I then stood, could be no other than of concluding the various fatigues of this day and the preceding night by passing, but which was now closing in *al fresco* on the side of a Highland hill.

After a moment's reflection I began to consider that Fair-service, who had doubtless crossed the river with the other domestics, according to his forward and impertinent custom of putting himself always among the foremost, could not fail to satisfy the Duke, or the competent authorities, respecting my rank and position; and that, therefore, my character did not require any immediate appearance, at the risk of being drowned in the river, of being unable to trace the march of the squadron, in case of my reaching the other side in safety; or, finally, of being cut down, right or wrong, by some straggler, who might think such a piece of good service a convenient excuse for not sooner rejoining his ranks. I therefore resolved to measure my steps back to the little inn where I had passed the preceding night. I had nothing to apprehend from Rob Roy. He was now at liberty, and I was certain, in case of my falling in with any of his people, the news of his escape would ensure me protection. I might thus also show that I had no intention to desert Mr. Jarvie in the delicate situation in which he had engaged himself, chiefly on my account. And lastly, it was only in this quarter that I could hope to learn tidings concerning Rashleigh and my father's papers, which had been the original cause of an expedition so fraught with perilous adventure. I therefore abandoned all thoughts of crossing the Forth that evening; and, turning my back on the Fords of Frew, began to retrace my steps towards the little village of Aberfoil.

A sharp frost-wind, which made itself heard and felt from time to time, removed the clouds of mist which might otherwise have slumbered till morning on the valley; and, though it could not totally disperse the clouds of vapour, it threw them in confused and changeful masses, now hovering round the heads of the mountains, now filling, as with a dense and voluminous stream of smoke, the various deep gullies where masses of the composite rock or breccia, tumbling in fragments from the cliffs, have rushed to the valley, leaving each behind its course

a rent and torn ravine resembling a deserted watercourse. The moon, which was now high, and twinkled with all the vivacity of a frosty atmosphere, silvered the windings of the river and the peaks and precipices which the mist left visible; while her beams seemed, as it were, absorbed by the fleecy whiteness of the mist where it lay thick and condensed, and gave to the more light and vapoury specks which were elsewhere visible a sort of filmy transparency resembling the lightest veil of silver gauze. Despite the uncertainty of my situation, a view so romantic, joined to the active and inspiring influence of the frosty atmosphere, elevated my spirits while it braced my nerves. I felt an inclination to cast care away and bid defiance to danger, and involuntarily whistled, by way of cadence to my steps, which my feeling of the cold led me to accelerate, and I felt the pulse of existence beat prouder and higher in proportion as I felt confidence in my own strength, courage, and resources. I was so much lost in these thoughts, and in the feelings which they excited, that two horsemen came up behind me without my hearing their approach, until one was on each side of me, when the left-hand rider, pulling up his horse, addressed me in the English tongue. 'So ho, friend, whither so late?'

'To my supper and bed at Aberfoil,' I replied.

'Are the passes open?' he inquired, with the same commanding tone of voice.

'I do not know,' I replied, 'I shall learn when I get there; but,' I added, the fate of Morris recurring to my recollection, 'if you are an English stranger I advise you to turn back till daylight; there has been some disturbance in this neighbourhood, and I should hesitate to say it is perfectly safe for strangers.'

'The soldiers had the worst, had they not?' was the reply.

'They had indeed; and an officer's party were destroyed or made prisoners.'

'Are you sure of that?' replied the horseman.

'As sure as that I hear you speak,' I replied. 'I was an unwilling spectator of the skirmish.'

'Unwilling?' continued the interrogator. 'Were you not engaged in it then?'

'Certainly no,' I replied; 'I was detained by the king's officer.'

'On what suspicion? and who are you? or what is your name?' he continued.

'I really do not know, sir,' said I, 'why I should answer so many questions to an unknown stranger. I have told you enough to convince you that you are going into a dangerous and distracted country. If you choose to proceed, it is your own affair; but, as I ask you no questions respecting your name and business, you will oblige me by making no inquiries after mine.'

'Mr. Francis Osbaldistone,' said the other rider, in a voice the tones of which thrilled through every nerve of my body, 'should not whistle his favourite airs when he wishes to remain undiscovered.'

And Diana Vernon — for she, wrapped in a horseman's cloak, was the last speaker — whistled in playful mimicry the second part of the tune which was on my lips when they came up.

'Good God!' I exclaimed, like one thunderstruck, 'can it be you, Miss Vernon, on such a spot, at such an hour, in such a lawless country, in such —'

'In such a masculine dress, you would say. But what would you have? The philosophy of the excellent Corporal Nym is the best after all: things must be as they may — *pauca verba*.'

While she was thus speaking I eagerly took advantage of an unusually bright gleam of moonshine to study the appearance of her companion; for it may be easily supposed that, finding Miss Vernon in a place so solitary, engaged in a journey so dangerous, and under the protection of one gentleman only, were circumstances to excite every feeling of jealousy as well as surprise. The rider did not speak with the deep melody of Rashleigh's voice; his tones were more high and commanding; he was taller, moreover, as he sate on horseback, than that first-rate object of my hate and suspicion. Neither did the stranger's address resemble that of any of my other cousins: it had that indescribable tone and manner by which we recognise a man of sense and breeding, even in the first few sentences he speaks.

The object of my anxiety seemed desirous to get rid of my investigation.

'Diana,' he said, in a tone of mingled kindness and authority, 'give your cousin his property, and let us not spend time here.'

Miss Vernon had in the meantime taken out a small case, and, leaning down from her horse towards me, she said, in a tone in which an effort at her usual quaint lightness of expression contended with a deeper and more grave tone of sentiment,

'You see, my dear coz, I was born to be your better angel. Rashleigh has been compelled to yield up his spoil, and had we reached this same village of Aberfoil last night, as we purposed, I should have found some Highland sylph to have wafted to you all these representatives of commercial wealth. But there were giants and dragons in the way; and errant-knights and damsels of modern times, bold though they be, must not, as of yore, run into useless danger. Do not you do so either, my dear coz.'

'Diana,' said her companion, 'let me once more warn you that the evening waxes late, and we are still distant from our home.'

'I am coming, sir, I am coming; consider,' she added with a sigh, 'how lately I have been subjected to control; besides, I have not yet given my cousin the packet, and bid him farewell — for ever. Yes, Frank,' she said, '*for ever!* There is a gulf between us — a gulf of absolute perdition; where we go, you must not follow; what we do, you must not share in. Farewell; be happy!'

In the attitude in which she bent from her horse, which was a Highland pony, her face, not perhaps altogether unwillingly, touched mine. She pressed my hand, while the tear that trembled in her eye found its way to my cheek instead of her own. It was a moment never to be forgotten — inexpressibly bitter, yet mixed with a sensation of pleasure so deeply soothing and affecting as at once to unlock all the floodgates of the heart. It was *but* a moment, however; for, instantly recovering from the feeling to which she had involuntarily given way, she intimated to her companion she was ready to attend him, and, putting their horses to a brisk pace, they were soon far distant from the place where I stood.

Heaven knows, it was not apathy which loaded my frame and my tongue so much that I could neither return Miss Vernon's half-embrace nor even answer her farewell. The word, though it rose to my tongue, seemed to choke in my throat like the fatal *guilty* which the delinquent who makes it his plea knows must be followed by the doom of death. The surprise, the sorrow almost stupified me. I remained motionless with the packet in my hand, gazing after them as if endeavouring to count the sparkles which flew from the horses' hoofs. I continued to look after even these had ceased to be visible, and to listen for their footsteps long after the last distant trampling had died in my ears. At length tears rushed

to my eyes, glazed as they were by the exertion of straining after what was no longer to be seen. I wiped them mechanically, and almost without being aware that they were flowing, but they came thicker and thicker. I felt the tightening of the throat and breast, the *hysterica passio* of poor Lear; and, sitting down by the wayside, I shed a flood of the first and most bitter tears which had flowed from my eyes since childhood.

CHAPTER XXXIV

Dangle. Egad, I think the interpreter is the harder to be understood of the two.

Critic.

I HAD scarce given vent to my feelings in this paroxysm ere I was ashamed of my weakness. I remembered that I had been for some time endeavouring to regard Diana Vernon, when her idea intruded itself on my remembrance, as a friend, for whose welfare I should indeed always be anxious, but with whom I could have little further communication. But the almost un-repressed tenderness of her manner, joined to the romance of our sudden meeting where it was so little to have been expected, were circumstances which threw me entirely off my guard. I recovered, however, sooner than might have been expected, and, without giving myself time accurately to examine my motives, I resumed the path on which I had been travelling when overtaken by this strange and unexpected apparition.

'I am not,' was my reflection, 'transgressing her injunction so pathetically given, since I am but pursuing my own journey by the only open route. If I have succeeded in recovering my father's property, it still remains incumbent on me to see my Glasgow friend delivered from the situation in which he has involved himself on my account; besides, what other place of rest can I obtain for the night excepting at the little inn of Aberfoil? They also must stop there, since it is impossible for travellers on horseback to go farther. Well, then, we shall meet again — meet for the last time perhaps; but I shall see and hear her; I shall learn who this happy man is who exercises over her the authority of a husband; I shall learn if there remains, in the difficult course in which she seems engaged, any difficulty which my efforts may remove, or aught that I can do to express my gratitude for her generosity — for her disinterested friendship.'

As I reasoned thus with myself, colouring with every plausible pretext which occurred to my ingenuity my passionate

desire once more to see and converse with my cousin, I was suddenly hailed by a touch on the shoulder; and the deep voice of a Highlander, who, walking still faster than I, though I was proceeding at a smart pace, accosted me with, 'A braw night, Maister Osbaldistone; we have met at the mirk hour before now.'

There was no mistaking the tone of MacGregor; he had escaped the pursuit of his enemies, and was in full retreat to his own wilds and to his adherents. He had also contrived to arm himself, probably at the house of some secret adherent, for he had a musket on his shoulder and the usual Highland weapons by his side. To have found myself alone with such a character in such a situation, and at this late hour in the evening, might not have been pleasant to me in any ordinary mood of mind; for, though habituated to think of Rob Roy in rather a friendly point of view, I will confess frankly that I never heard him speak but that it seemed to thrill my blood. The intonation of the mountaineers gives a habitual depth and hollowness to the sound of their words, owing to the guttural expression so common in their native language, and they usually speak with a good deal of emphasis. To these national peculiarities Rob Roy added a sort of hard indifference of accent and manner, expressive of a mind neither to be daunted nor surprised nor affected by what passed before him, however dreadful, however sudden, however afflicting. Habitual danger, with unbounded confidence in his own strength and sagacity, had rendered him indifferent to fear; and the lawless and precarious life he led had blunted, though its dangers and errors had not destroyed, his feelings for others. And it was to be remembered that I had very lately seen the followers of this man commit a cruel slaughter on an unarmed and suppliant individual.

Yet such was the state of my mind that I welcomed the company of the outlaw leader as a relief to my own overstrained and painful thoughts; and was not without hopes that through his means I might obtain some clue of guidance through the maze in which my fate had involved me. I therefore answered his greeting cordially, and congratulated him on his late escape in circumstances when escape seemed impossible.

'Ay,' he replied, 'there is as much between the craig and the woodie as there is between the cup and the lip. But my peril was less than you may think, being a stranger to this country.'

Of those that were summoned to take me and to keep me and to retake me again, there was a moiety, as cousin Nicol Jarvie calls it, that had nae will that I suld be either taen or keepit fast or retaeen; and of t'other moiety there was ae half was feared to stir me; and so I had only like the fourth part of fifty or sixty men to deal withal.'

'And enough too, I should think,' replied I.

'I dinna ken that,' said he; 'but I ken that, turn every ill-willer that I had amang them out upon the green before the Clachan of Aberfoil, I wad find them play with broadsword and target, one down and another come on.'

He now inquired into my adventures since we entered his country, and laughed heartily at my account of the battle we had in the inn, and at the exploits of the Bailie with the red-hot poker.

"Let Glasgow flourish!" he exclaimed. "The curse of Cromwell on me if I wad hae wished better sport than to see cousin Nicol Jarvie singe Inverach's plaid like a sheep's head between a pair of tongs. But my cousin Jarvie," he added, more gravely, "has some gentleman's bluid in his veins, although he has been unhappily bred up to a peaceful and mechanical craft, which could not but blunt any pretty man's spirit. Ye may estimate the reason why I could not receive you at the Clachan of Aberfoil, as I purposed. They had made a fine hose-net for me when I was absent twa or three days at Glasgow upon the king's business; but I think I broke up the league about their lugs: they'll no be able to hound one clan against another as they hae dune. I hope soon to see the day when a' Hielandmen will stand shouther to shouther. But what chanced next?"

I gave him an account of the arrival of Captain Thornton and his party, and the arrest of the Bailie and myself, under pretext of our being suspicious persons; and upon his more special inquiry I recollected the officer had mentioned that, besides my name sounding suspicious in his ears, he had orders to secure an old and young person resembling our description. This again moved the outlaw's risibility.

'As man lives by bread,' he said, 'the buzzards have mistaen my friend the Bailie for his Excellency, and you for Diana Vernon. O, the most egregious night-howlets!'

'Miss Vernon?' said I, with hesitation, and trembling for the answer, 'does she still bear that name? She passed but now, along with a gentleman who seemed to use a style of authority.'



THE ESCAPE OF ROB ROY AT THE FORD
From a painting by Bough.

'Ay, ay!' answered Rob, 'she's under lawfu' authority now; and full time, for she was a daft hempie. But she's a mettle quean. It's a pity his Excellency is a thought eldern. The like o' yoursell or my son Hamish wad be mair sortable in point of years.'

Here, then, was a complete downfall of those castles of cards which my fancy had, in despite of my reason, so often amused herself with building. Although in truth I had scarcely anything else to expect, since I could not suppose that Diana could be travelling in such a country, at such an hour, with any but one who had a legal title to protect her, I did not feel the blow less severely when it came, and MacGregor's voice, urging me to pursue my story, sounded in my ears without conveying any exact import to my mind.

'You are ill,' he said, at length, after he had spoken twice without receiving an answer; 'this day's wark has been ower muckle for ane doubtless unused to sic things.'

The tone of kindness in which this was spoken recalling me to myself, and to the necessities of my situation, I continued my narrative as well as I could. Rob Roy expressed great exultation at the successful skirmish in the pass.

'They say,' he observed, 'that king's chaff is better than other folks' corn; but I think that canna be said o' king's soldiers, if they let themselves be beaten wi' a wheen auld carles that are past fighting, and bairns that are no come till 't, and wives wi' their rocks and distaffs, the very wally-draigles o' the country-side; and Dougal Gregor, too, wha wad hae thought there had been as muckle sense in his tatty pow, that ne'er had a better covering than his ain shaggy hassock of hair! But say away, though I dread what's to come neist, for my Helen's an incarnate devil when her bluid's up; puir thing, she has ower muckle reason.'

I observed as much delicacy as I could in communicating to him the usage we had received, but I obviously saw the detail gave him great pain.

'I wad rather than a thousand merks,' he said, 'that I had been at hame! To misguide strangers, and forbye a' my ain natural cousin, that had showed me sic kindness; I wad rather they had burned half the Lennox in their folly! But this comes o' trusting women and their bairns, that have neither measure nor reason in their dealings. However, it's a' owing to that dog of a gauger, wha betrayed me by pretending a message from your cousin Rashleigh, to meet him on the king's affairs,

whilk I thought was very like to be anent Garschattachin and a party of the Lennox declaring themselves for King James Faith, but I kend I was clean beguiled when I heard the Duke was there; and when they strapped the horse-girth ower my arms I might hae judged what was biding me; for I kend your kinsman, being, wi' pardon, a slippery loon himsell, is prone to employ those of his ain kidney. I wish he mayna hae been at the bottom o' the ploy himsell; I thought the chield Morris looked devilish queer when I determined he should remain a wad or hostage for my safe back-coming. But I *am* come back, nae thanks to him or them that employed him, and the question is, how the collector loon is to win back himsell. I promise him it will not be without ransom.'

'Morris,' said I, 'has already paid the last ransom which mortal man can owe.'

'Eh! What?' exclaimed my companion, hastily; 'what d'ye say? I trust it was in the skirmish he was killed!'

'He was slain in cold blood after the fight was over, Mr. Campbell.'

'Cold blood? Damnation!' he said, muttering betwixt his teeth. 'How fell that, sir? Speak out, sir, and do not Maister or Campbell me; my foot is on my native heath, and my name is MacGregor!'

His passions were obviously irritated; but, without noticing the rudeness of his tone, I gave him a short and distinct account of the death of Morris. He struck the butt of his gun with great vehemence against the ground, and broke out, 'I vow to God, such a deed might make one forswear kin, clan, country, wife, and bairns! And yet the villain wrought long for it. And what is the difference between warsling below the water wi' a stane about your neck and wavering in the wind wi' a tether round it? it's but choking after a', and he drees the doom he ettled for me. I could have wished, though, they had rather putten a ball through him, or a dirk; for the fashion of removing him will give rise to mony idle clavers. But every wight has his weird, and we maun a' dee when our day comes. And naebody will deny that Helen MacGregor has deep wrongs to avenge.'

So saying, he seemed to dismiss the theme altogether from his mind, and proceeded to inquire how I got free from the party in whose hands he had seen me.

My story was soon told; and I added the episode of my having recovered the papers of my father, though I dared not trust my voice to name the name of Diana.

'I was sure ye wad get them,' said MacGregor; 'the letter ye brought me contained his Excellency's pleasure to that effect; and nae doubt it was my will to have aided in it. And I asked ye up into this glen on the very errand. But it's like his Excellency has forgathered wi' Rashleigh sooner than I expected.'

The first part of this answer was what most forcibly struck me.

'Was the letter I brought you, then, from this person you call his Excellency? Who is he? and what is his rank and proper name?'

'I am thinking,' said MacGregor, 'that, since ye dinna ken them already, they canna be o' muckle consequence to you, and sae I shall say naething on that score. But weel I wot the letter was frae his ain hand, or, having a sort of business of my ain on my hands, being, as ye weel may see, just as my ain can fairly manage, I canna say I would hae fashed my muckle about the matter.'

I now recollected the lights seen in the library, the circumstances which had excited my jealousy -- the agitation of the tapestry which covered the secret passage to Rashleigh's apartment; and, above all, I recollected that I had retired in order to write, as I then thought, the billet to which I was to have recourse in case of the last necessity. Her hours, then, were not spent in solitude, but in listening to the addresses of some desperate agent of Jacobitical treason, who was a secret resident within the mansion of her uncle. Other young women have sold themselves for gold, or suffered themselves to be seduced from their first love from vanity; but Diana had sacrificed my affections and her own to partake the fortunes of some desperate adventurer, to seek the haunts of freebooters through midnight deserts, with no better hopes of success or fortune than that mimicry of both which the usquebaugh of the Stuarts at St. Germain had in their power to bestow.

'I will see her,' I said, internally, 'if it be possible, more. I will argue with her as a friend, as a kinsman, of the risk she is incurring, and I will facilitate her retreat to France, where she may, with more comfort and propriety, as well as safety, abide the issue of the turmoils which the political trepanner to whom she has united her fate is doubtless busied in putting into motion.'

'I conclude, then,' I said to MacGregor, after about five minutes' silence on both sides, 'that his Excellency, since you

give me no other name for him, was residing in Osbaldistone Hall at the same time with myself!

'To be sure — to be sure; and in the young lady's apartment, as best reason was.' This gratuitous information was adding gall to bitterness. 'But fow,' added MacGregor, 'kend he was derved there, save Rashleigh and Sir Hildebrand; for you were out o' the question, and the young lads haena wit enough to ca' the cat frae the cream. But it's a bra' auld-fashioned house; and what I specially admire is the abundance o' holes and boroos and concealments: ye could put twenty or thirty men in ae corner, and a family might live a week without finding them out, whilk, nae doubt, may on occasion be a special convenience. I wish we had the like o' Osbaldistone Hall on the braes o' Craig Royston. But we maun gar woods and caves serve the like o' us puir Hieland bodies.'

'I suppose his Excellency,' said I, 'was privy to the first accident which befell —'

I could not help hesitating a moment.

'Ye were going to say Morris,' said Rob Roy, coolly, for he was too much accustomed to deeds of violence for the agitation he had at first expressed to be of long continuance. 'I used to laugh heartily at that reik, but I'll hardly hae the heart to do't again, since the ill-faur'd accident at the Loch. Na, na, his Excellency kend nought o' that ploy; it was a' managed atween Rashleigh and mysell. But the sport that came after, and Rashleigh's shift o' turning the suspicion aff himsell upon you, that he had nae grit favour to frae the beginning; and then Miss Die, she maun hae us sweep up a' our spiders' webs again, and set you out o' the Justice's claws; and then the frightened craven, Morris, that was scared out o' his seven senses by seeing the real man when he was charging the innocent stranger; and the gowk of a clerk, and the drunken carle of a justice — ohon! ohon! mony a laugh that job's gien me; and now a' that I can do for the puir devil is to get some messes said for his soul.'

'May I ask,' said I, 'how Miss Vernon came to have so much influence over Rashleigh and his accomplices as to derange your projected plan?'

'Mine? it was none of mine. No man can say I ever laid my burden on other folks' shoulders; it was a' Rashleigh's doings. But undoubtedly she had great influence wi' us baith on account of his Excellency's affection, as weel as that she kend far ower mony secrets to be lightlied in a matter o' that

kind. Deil tak him,' he ejaculated, by way of summing up, 'that gies women either secret to keep or power to abuse; fules shouldna hae chapping sticks.'

We were now within a quarter of a mile from the village, when three Highlanders, springing upon us with presented arms, commanded us to stand and tell our business. The single word 'Gregarach,' in the deep and commanding voice of my companion, was answered by a shout, or rather yell, of joyful recognition. One, throwing down his firelock, clasped his leader so fast round the knees that he was unable to extricate himself, muttering at the same time a torrent of Gaelic gratulation, which every now and then rose into a sort of scream of gladness. The two others, after the first howling was over, set off literally with the speed of deers, contending which should first carry to the village, which a strong party of the MacGregors now occupied, the joyful news of Rob Roy's escape and return. The intelligence excited such shouts of jubilation that the very hills rung again, and young and old, men, women, and children, without distinction of sex or age, came running down the vale to meet us, with all the tumultuous speed and clamour of a mountain torrent. When I heard the rushing noise and yells of this joyful multitude approach us, I thought it a fitting precaution to remind MacGregor that I was a stranger, and under his protection. He accordingly held me fast by the hand while the assemblage crowded around him with such shouts of devoted attachment and joy at his return as were really affecting; nor did he extend to his followers what all eagerly sought, the grasp, namely, of his hand, until he had made them understand that I was to be kindly and carefully used.

The mandate of the Sultan of Delhi could not have been more promptly obeyed. Indeed, I now sustained nearly as much inconvenience from their well-meant attentions as formerly from their rudeness. They would hardly allow the friend of their leader to walk upon his own legs, so earnest were they in affording me support and assistance upon the way; and at length, taking advantage of a slight stumble which I made over a stone, which the press did not permit me to avoid, they fairly seized upon me and bore me in their arms in triumph towards Mrs. MacAlpine's.

On arrival before her hospitable wigwam I found power and popularity had its inconveniences in the Highlands, as every where else; for, before MacGregor could be permitted to enter

the house where he was to obtain rest and refreshment, he was obliged to relate the story of his escape at least a dozen times over, as I was told by an officious old man, who chose to translate it at least as often for my edification, and to whom I was in policy obliged to seem to pay a decent degree of attention. The audience being at length satisfied, group after group departed to take their bed upon the heath, or in the neighbouring huts, some cursing the Duke and Garschattachin, some lamenting the probable danger of Ewan of Brigglands, incurred by his friendship to MacGregor, but all agreeing that the escape of Rob Roy himself lost nothing in comparison with the exploit of any one of their chiefs since the days of Dougal Ciar, the founder of his line.

The friendly outlaw, now taking me by the arm, conducted me into the interior of the hut. My eyes roved round its smoky recesses in quest of Diana and her companion; but they were nowhere to be seen, and I felt as if to make inquiries might betray some secret motives which were best concealed. The only known countenance upon which my eyes rested was that of the Bailie, who, seated on a stool by the fireside, received, with a sort of reserved dignity, the welcomes of Rob Roy, the apologies which he made for his indifferent accommodation, and his inquiries after his health.

'I am pretty weel, kinsman,' said the Bailie, 'indifferent weel, I thank ye; and for accommodations, ane canna expect to carry about the Saut Market at his tail, as a snail does his camp; and I am blythe that ye hae gotten out o' the hands o' your unfreends.'

'Weel, weel, then,' answered Roy, 'what is't ails ye, man; A's weel that ends weel! the world will last our day. Come, take a cup o' brandy; your father the deacon could tak ane at an orra time.'

'It might be he might do sae, Robin, after fatigue, whilk has been my lot mair ways than ane this day. But,' he continued, slowly filling up a little wooden stoup which might hold about three glasses, 'he was a moderate man of his bicker, as I am mysell. Here's wussing health to ye, Robin (a sip), and your weelfare here and hereafter (another taste), and also to my cousin Helen, and to your twa hopefu' lads, of whom mair anon.'

So saying, he drank up the contents of the cup with great gravity and deliberation, while MacGregor winked aside to me, as if in ridicule of the air of wisdom and superior authority

which the Bailie assumed towards him in their intercourse, and which he exercised when Rob was at the head of his armed clan in full as great, or a greater, degree than when he was at the Bailie's mercy in the tolbooth of Glasgow. It seemed to me that MacGregor wished me, as a stranger, to understand that, if he submitted to the tone which his kinsman assumed, it was partly out of deference to the rights of hospitality, but still more for the jest's sake.

As the Bailie set down his cup he recognised me, and, giving me a cordial welcome on my return, he waived farther communication with me for the present.

'I will speak to your matters anon; I maun begin, as in reason, wi' those of my kinsman. I presume, Robin, there's naeboddy here will carry aught o' what I am gaun to say to the town-council or elsewhere to my prejudice or to yours?'

'Make yourself easy on that head, cousin Nicol,' answered MacGregor; 'the tae half o' the gillies winna ken what ye say, and the tother winna care; besides, that I wad stow the tongue out o' the head o' ony o' them that suld presume to say ower again ony speech held wi' me in their presence.'

'Aweel, cousin, sic being the case, and Mr. Osbaldistone here being a prudent youth, and a safe friend, I'se plainly tell ye, ye are breeding up your family to gang an ill gate.' Then clearing his voice with a preliminary hem, he addressed his kinsman, checking, as Malvolio proposed to do when seated in his state, his familiar smile with an austere regard of control.

'Ye ken yoursell ye hand light by the law; and for my cousin Helen, forbye that her reception o' me this blessed day, whilk I excuse on account of perturbation of mind, was muckle on the north side o' *friendly*, I say — out-putting this personal reason of complaint — I hae that to say o' your wife —'

'Say *nothing* of her, kinsman,' said Rob, in a grave and stern tone, 'but what is befitting a friend to say and her husband to hear. Of me you are welcome to say your full pleasure.'

'Aweel, aweel,' said the Bailie, somewhat disconcerted, 'we'se let that be a pass-over; I dinna approve of making mischief in families. But here are your twa sons, Hamish and Robin, whilk signifies, as I'm gien to understand, James and Robert. I trust ye will call them sae in future; there comes nae gude o' Hamishes and Eachines and Angusses, except that they're the names ane aye chances to see in the indictments at the western circuits for cow-lifting, at the instance

of His Majesty's advocate for his Majesty's interest. Aweel, but the twa lads, as I was saying, they haena sae muckle as the ordinar grunds, man, of liberal education: they dinna ken the very multiplication table itself, whilk is the root of a' usefu' knowledge, and they did naething but laugh and fleer at me when I tauld them my mind on their ignorance. It's my belief they can neither read, write, nor cipher, if sic a thing could be believed o' ane's ain connexions in a Christian land.'

'If they could, kinsman,' said MacGregor, with great indifference, 'their learning must have come o' free will, for whar the deil was I to get them a teacher? Wad ye hae had me put on the gate o' your Divinity Hall at Glasgow College, "Wanted, a tutor for Rob Roy's bairns"?''

'Na, kinsman,' replied Mr. Jarvie, 'but ye might hae sent the lads whar they could hae learned the fear o' God and the usages of civilised creatures. They are as ignorant as the kyloes ye used to drive to market, or the very English churis that ye sauld them to, and can do naething whatever to purpose.'

'Umph!' answered Rob; 'Hamish can bring down a black-cock when he's on the wing wi' a single bullet, and Rob can drive a dirk through a twa-inch board.'

'Sae muckle the waur for them, cousin — sae muckle the waur for them baith!' answered the Glasgow merchant in a tone of great decision; 'an they ken naething better than that they had better no ken that neither. Tell me yoursell, Rob, what has a' this cutting, and stabbing, and shooting, and driving of dirks, whether through human flesh or fir deals, dune for yoursell? and werena ye a happier man at the tail o' your nowt-bestial, when ye were in an honest calling, than ever ye hae been since, at the head o' your Hieland kernes and gallyglasses?'

I observed that MacGregor, while his well-meaning kinsman spoke to him in this manner, turned and writhed his body like a man who indeed suffers pain, but is determined no groan shall escape his lips; and I longed for an opportunity to interrupt the well-meant, but, as it was obvious to me, quite mistaken strain in which Jarvie addressed this extraordinary person. The dialogue, however, came to an end without my interference.

'And sae,' said the Bailie, 'I hae been thinking, Rob, that, as it may be ye are ower deep in the black book to win a pardon, and ower auld to mend yourseil, that it wad be a pity to bring up twa hopefu' lads to sic a godless trade as your ain,

and I wad blythely tak them for prentices at the loom, as I began mysell and my father the deacon afore me, though, praise to the Giver! I only trade now as wholesale dealer. And — and —

He saw a storm gathering on Rob's brow, which probably induced him to throw in, as a sweetener of an obnoxious proposition, what he had reserved to crown his own generosity, had it been embraced as an acceptable one. 'And, Robin, lad, ye needna look sae glum, for I'll pay the prentice-fee, and never plague ye for the thousand merks neither.'

'*Ceade millia diaoul* — hundred thousand devils!' exclaimed Rob, rising and striding through the hut. 'My sons weavers! *Millia molligheart!* but I wad see every loom in Glasgow, beam, traddles, and shuttles, burnt in hell fire sooner!'

With some difficulty I made the Bailie, who was preparing a reply, comprehend the risk and impropriety of pressing our host on this topic, and in a minute he recovered, or reassumed, his serenity of temper.

'But ye mean weel — ye mean weel,' said he; 'so gie me your hand, Nicol, and if ever I put my sons apprentice I will gie you the refusal o' them. And, as you say, there's the thousand merks to be settled between us. Here, Eachin Mac-Analeister, bring me my sporran.'

The person he addressed, a tall, strong mountaineer, who seemed to act as MacGregor's lieutenant, brought from some place of safety a large leathern pouch, such as Highlanders of rank wear before them when in full dress, made of the skin of the sea otter, richly garnished with silver ornaments and studs.

'I advise no man to attempt opening this sporran till he has my secret,' said Rob Roy; and then twisting one button in one direction, and another in another, pulling one stud upward, and pressing another downward, the mouth of the purse, which was bound with massive silver-plate, opened and gave admittance to his hand. He made me remark, as if to break short the subject on which Bailie Jarvie had spoken, that a small steel pistol was concealed within the purse, the trigger of which was connected with the mounting, and made part of the machinery, so that the weapon would certainly be discharged, and in all probability its contents lodged in the person of any one who, being unacquainted with the secret, should tamper with the lock which secured his treasure. 'This,' said he, touching the pistol — 'this is the keeper of my privy purse.'

The simplicity of the contrivance to secure a furred pouch,

which could have been ripped open without any attempt on the spring, reminded me of the verses in the *Odyssey*, where Ulysses, in a yet ruder age, is content to secure his property by casting a curious and involved complication of cordage around the sea-chest in which it was deposited.

The Bailie put on his spectacles to examine the mechanism, and when he had done, returned it with a smile and a sigh, observing, 'Ah! Rob, had ither folks' purses been as weel guarded, I doubt if your sporan wad hae been as weel filled as it kythes to be by the weight.'

'Never mind, kinsman,' said Rob, laughing, 'it will aye open for a friend's necessity or to pay a just due; and here,' he added, pulling out a rouleau of gold — 'here is your ten hundred merks; count them and see that you are full and justly paid.'

Mr. Jarvie took the money in silence, and, weighing it in his hand for an instant, laid it on the table, and replied, 'Rob, I canna tak it, I downa intromit with it; there can nae gude come o't. I hae seen ower weel the day what sort of a gate your gowd is made in: ill-got gear ne'er prospered; and, to be plain wi' you, I winna meddle wi't; it looks as there might be bluid on't.'

'Troutsho!' said the outlaw, affecting an indifference which, perhaps, he did not altogether feel, 'it's gude French gowd, and ne'er was in Scotchman's pouch before mine; look at them, man, they are a' louis d'ors, bright and bonnie as the day they were coined.'

'The waur, the waur — just sae muckle the waur, Robin,' replied the Bailie, averting his eyes from the money, though, like Cæsar on the Lupercal, his fingers seemed to itch for it. 'Rebellion is waur than witchcraft or robbery either; there's gospel warrant for 't.'

'Never mind the warrant, kinsman,' said the freebooter; 'you come by the gowd honestly, and in payment of a just debt. It came from the one king, you may gie it to the other, if ye like; and it will just serve for a weakening of the enemy, and in the point where puir King James is weakest too: for, God knows, he has hands and hearts enough, but I doubt he wants the siller.'

'He'll no get mony Hielanders then, Robin,' said Mr. Jarvie, as, again replacing his spectacles on his nose, he undid the rouleau and began to count its contents.

'Nor Lowlanders neither,' said MacGregor, arching his eyebrow, and, as he looked at me, directing a glance towards Mr

Jarvie, who, all unconscious of the ridicule, weighed each piece with habitual scrupulosity; and having told twice over the sum, which amounted to the discharge of his debt, principal and interest, he returned three pieces to buy his kinswoman a gown, as he expressed himself, and a brace more for the twa bairns, as he called them, requesting they might buy anything they liked with them except gunpowder. The Highlander stared at his kinsman's unexpected generosity, but courteously accepted his gift, which he deposited for the time in his well-secured pouch.

The Bailie next produced the original bond for the debt, on the back of which he had written a formal discharge, which, having subscribed himself, he requested me to sign as a witness. I did so, and Bailie Jarvie was looking anxiously around for another, the Scottish law requiring the subscription of two witnesses to validate either a bond or acquittance. 'You will hardly find a man that can write save ourselves within these three miles,' said Rob, 'but I'll settle the matter as easily'; and, taking the paper from before his kinsman, he threw it in the fire. Bailie Jarvie stared in his turn, but his kinsman continued, 'That's a Hieland settlement of accounts; the time might come, cousin, were I to keep a' these charges and discharges, that friends might be brought into trouble for having dealt with me.'

The Bailie attempted no reply to this argument, and our supper now appeared in a style of abundance, and even delicacy, which, for the place, might be considered as extraordinary. The greater part of the provisions were cold, intimating they had been prepared at some distance; and there were some bottles of good French wine to relish pasties of various sorts of game, as well as other dishes. I remarked that MacGregor, while doing the honours of the table with great and anxious hospitality, prayed us to excuse the circumstance that some particular dish or pasty had been infringed on before it was presented to us. 'You must know,' said he to Mr. Jarvie, but without looking towards me, 'you are not the only guests this night in the MacGregor's country, whilk, doubtless, ye will believe, since my wife and the twa lads would otherwise have been maist ready to attend you, as weel beseems them.'

Bailie Jarvie looked as if he felt glad at any circumstance which occasioned their absence; and I should have been entirely of his opinion had it not been that the outlaw's apology seemed to imply they were in attendance on Diana and her companion,

whom even in my thoughts I could not bear to designate as her husband.

While the unpleasant ideas arising from this suggestion counteracted the good effects of appetite, welcome, and good cheer, I remarked that Rob Roy's attention had extended itself to providing us better bedding than we had enjoyed the night before. Two of the least fragile of the bedsteads which stood by the wall of the hut had been stuffed with heath, then in full flower, so artificially arranged that the flowers, being uppermost, afforded a mattress at once elastic and fragrant. Cloaks, and such bedding as could be collected, stretched over this vegetable couch, made it both soft and warm. The Bailie seemed exhausted by fatigue. I resolved to adjourn my communication to him until next morning; and therefore suffered him to betake himself to bed so soon as he had finished a plentiful supper. Though tired and harassed, I did not myself feel the same disposition to sleep, but rather a restless and feverish anxiety, which led to some farther discourse betwixt me and MacGregor.

CHAPTER XXXV

A hopeless darkness settles o'er my fate ;
I've seen the last look of her heavenly eyes,
I've heard the last sound of her blessed voice,
I've seen her fair form from my sight depart:
My doom is closed.

Count Basil.

I KEN not what to make of you, Mr. Osbaldistone,' said MacGregor, as he pushed the flask towards me. 'You eat not, you show no wish for rest ; and yet you drink not, though that flask of Bourdeaux might have come out of Sir Hildebrand's ain cellar. Had you been always as abstinent, you would have escaped the deadly hatred of your cousin Rashleigh.'

'Had I been always prudent,' said I, blushing at the scene he recalled to my recollection, 'I should have escaped a worse evil — the reproach of my own conscience.'

MacGregor cast a keen and somewhat fierce glance on me, as if to read whether the reproof, which he evidently felt, had been intentionally conveyed. He saw that I was thinking of myself, not of him, and turned his face towards the fire with a deep sigh. I followed his example, and each remained for a few minutes wrapt in his own painful reverie. All in the hut were now asleep, or at least silent, excepting ourselves.

MacGregor first broke silence, in the tone of one who takes up his determination to enter on a painful subject. 'My cousin Nicol Jarvie means well,' he said, 'but he presses over hard on the temper and situation of a man like me, considering what I have been — what I have been forced to become — and, above all, that which has forced me to become what I am.'

He paused ; and, though feeling the delicate nature of the discussion in which the conversation was likely to engage me, I could not help replying, that I did not doubt his present situation had much which must be most unpleasant to his

feelings. 'I should be happy to learn,' I added, 'that there is an honourable chance of your escaping from it.'

'You speak like a boy,' returned MacGregor, in a low tone that growled like distant thunder — 'like a boy, who thinks the auld gnarled oak can be twisted as easily as the young sapling. Can I forget that I have been branded as an outlaw, stigmatised as a traitor, a price set on my head as if I had been a wolf; my family treated as the dam and cubs of the hill fox, whom all may torment, vilify, degrade, and insult; the very name which came to me from a long and noble line of martial ancestors denounced, as if it were a spell to conjure up the devil with?'

As he went on in this manner, I could plainly see that, by the enumeration of his wrongs, he was lashing himself up into a rage, in order to justify in his own eyes the errors they had led him into. In this he perfectly succeeded; his light grey eyes contracting alternately and dilating their pupils, until they seemed actually to flash with flame, while he thrust forward and drew back his foot, grasped the hilt of his dirk, extended his arm, clenched his fist, and finally rose from his seat.

'And they *shall* find,' he said, in the same muttered but deep tone of stifled passion, 'that the name they have dared to prescribe — that the name of MacGregor — *is* a spell to raise the wild devil withal. *They* shall hear of my vengeance that would scorn to listen to the story of my wrongs. The miserable Highland drover, bankrupt, barefooted, stripped of all, dishonoured and hunted down, because the avarice of others grasped at more than that poor all could pay, shall burst on them in an awful change. They that scoffed at the grovelling worm and trode upon him may cry and howl when they see the stoop of the flying and fiery-mouthed dragon. But why do I speak of all this?' he said, sitting down again, and in a calmer tone. 'Only ye may opine it frets my patience, Mr. Osbaldistone, to be hunted like an otter, or a sealgh, or a salmon upon the shallows, and that by my very friends and neighbours; and to have as many sword-cuts made, and pistols flashed at me, as I had this day in the ford of Avondow would try a saint's temper, much more a Highlander's, who are not famous for that gude gift, as ye may hae heard, Mr. Osbaldistone. But ae thing bides wi' me o' what Nicol said. I'm vexed for the bairns; I'm vexed when I think o' Hamish and Robert living their father's life.' And, yielding to despondence on account of his sons

which he felt not upon his own, the father rested his head upon his hand.

I was much affected, Will. All my life long I have been more melted by the distress under which a strong, proud, and powerful mind is compelled to give way than by the more easily excited sorrows of softer dispositions. The desire of aiding him rushed strongly on my mind, notwithstanding the apparent difficulty, and even impossibility, of the task.

'We have extensive connexions abroad,' said I; 'might not your sons, with some assistance — and they are well entitled to what my father's house can give — find an honourable resource in foreign service?'

I believe my countenance showed signs of sincere emotion; but my companion, taking me by the hand, as I was going to speak farther, said, 'I thank — I thank ye; but let us say nae mair o' this. I did not think the eye of man would again have seen a tear on MacGregor's eyelash.' He dashed the moisture from his long grey eyelash and shaggy red eyebrow with the back of his hand. 'To-morrow morning,' he said, 'we'll talk of this, and we will talk, too, of your affairs; for we are early starters in the dawn, even when we have the luck to have good beds to sleep in. Will ye not pledge me in a grace cup?' I declined the invitation.

'Then, by the soul of St. Maronoch! I must pledge myself,' and he poured out and swallowed at least half a quart of wine.

I laid myself down to repose, resolving to delay my own inquiries until his mind should be in a more composed state. Indeed, so much had this singular man possessed himself of my imagination, that I felt it impossible to avoid watching him for some minutes after I had flung myself on my heath mattress to seeming rest. He walked up and down the hut, crossed himself from time to time, muttering over some Latin prayer of the Catholic Church; then wrapped himself in his plaid, with his naked sword on one side and his pistol on the other, so disposing the folds of his mantle that he could start up at a moment's warning, with a weapon in either hand ready for instant combat. In a few minutes his heavy breathing announced that he was fast asleep. Overpowered by fatigue, and stunned by the various unexpected and extraordinary scenes of the day, I, in my turn, was soon overpowered by a slumber deep and overwhelming, from which, notwithstanding every cause for watchfulness, I did not awake until the next morning.

When I opened my eyes and recollected my situation, I found that MacGregor had already left the hut. I awakened the Bailie, who, after many a short and groan, and some heavy complaints of the soreness of his bones, in consequence of the unwonted exertions of the preceding day, was at length able to comprehend the joyful intelligence that the assets carried off by Rashleigh Osbaldistone had been safely recovered. The instant he understood my meaning he forgot all his grievances, and, bustling up in a great hurry, proceeded to compare the contents of the packet, which I put into his hands, with Mr. Owen's memorandums, muttering as he went on, 'Right, right, the real thing. Baillie and Whittington — where's Baillie and Whittington? — seven hundred, six, and eight — exact to a fraction. Pollock and Peelman — twenty-eight, seven — exact. Praise be blest! Grub and Grinder — better men cannot be — three hundred and seventy. Gliblad — twenty; I doubt Gliblad's ganging. Slipprytongue — Slipprytongue's gaen; but they are sma' sums — sma' sums. The rest's a' right. Praise be blest! we have got the stuff, and may leave this doleful country. I shall never think on Loch Ard but the thought will gar me grew again.'

'I am sorry, cousin,' said MacGregor, who entered the hut during the last observation, 'I have not been altogether in the circumstances to make your reception sic as I could have desired; nathless, if you would condescend to visit my puir dwelling —'

'Muckle obliged, muckle obliged,' answered Mr. Jarvie, very hastily. 'But we maun be ganging — we maun be jogging, Mr. Osbaldistone and me; business canna wait.'

'Aweel, kinsman,' replied the Highlander, 'ye ken our fashion: foster the guest that comes, further him that maun gang. But ye cannot return by Drymen; I must set ye on Loch Lomond, and boat ye down to the Ferry o' Balloch, and send your nags round to meet ye there. It's a maxim of a wise man never to return by the same road he came, providing another's free to him.'

'Ay, ay, Rob,' said the Bailie, 'that's ane o' the maxims ye learned when ye were a drover; ye caredna to face the tenants where your beasts had been taking a rug of their moorland grass in the bye-ganging; and I doubt your road's waur marked now than it was then.'

'The mair need not to travel it ower often, kinsman,' replied Rob; 'but I'll send round your nags to the ferry wi' Dougal Gregor, wha is converted for that purpose into the Bailie's man.'

coming — not, as ye may believe, from Aberfoil or Rob Roy's country, but on a quiet jaunt from Stirling. See, here he is.

'I wadna hae kend the creature,' said Mr. Jarvie; nor indeed was it easy to recognise the wild Highlander when he appeared before the door of the cottage, attired in a hat, periwig, and riding coat which had once called Andrew Fairservice master, and mounted on the Bailie's horse, and leading mine. He received his last orders from his master to avoid certain places where he might be exposed to suspicion, to collect what intelligence he could in the course of his journey, and to await our coming at an appointed place near the Ferry of Balloch.

At the same time MacGregor invited us to accompany him upon our own road, assuring us that we must necessarily march a few miles before breakfast, and recommending a dram of brandy as a proper introduction to the journey, in which he was pledged by the Bailie, who pronounced it 'an unlawful and perilous habit to begin the day wi' spirituous liquors, except to defend the stomach, whilk was a tender part, against the morning mist; in whilk case his father the deacon had recommended a dram by precept and example.'

'Very true, kinsman,' replied Rob; 'for which reason we, who are Children of the Mist, have a right to drink brandy from morning till night.'

The Bailie, thus refreshed, was mounted on a small Highland pony; another was offered for my use, which, however, I declined, and we resumed, under very different guidance and auspices, our journey of the preceding day.

Our escort consisted of MacGregor and five or six of the handsomest, best armed, and most athletic mountaineers of his band, and whom he had generally in immediate attendance upon his own person.

When we approached the pass, the scene of the skirmish of the preceding day, and of the still more direful deed which followed it, MacGregor hastened to speak, as if it were rather to what he knew must be necessarily passing in my mind than to anything I had said; he spoke, in short, to my thoughts, and not to my words.

'You must think hardly of us, Mr. Osbaldistone, and it is not natural that it should be otherwise. But remember, at least, we have not been unprovoked: we are a rude and an ignorant, and it may be a violent and passionate, but we are not a cruel, people; the land might be at peace and in law for us,

did they allow us to enjoy the blessings of peaceful law. But we have been a persecuted generation.

'And persecution,' said the Bailie, 'maketh wise men mad.'

'What must it do then to men like us, living as our fathers did a thousand years since, and possessing scarce more rights than they did? Can we view their bloody edicts against us, their hanging, heading, hounding, and hunting down an ancient and honourable name, as deserving better treatment than that which enemies give to enemies? Here I stand, have been in twenty frayes, and never hurt man but when I was in hot blood; and yet they wad betray me and hang me like a masterless dog, at the gate of ony great man that has an ill will at me.'

I replied, 'that the proscription of his name and family sounded in English ears as a very cruel and arbitrary law'; and having thus far soothed him, I resumed my propositions of obtaining military employment for himself, if he chose it, and his sons in foreign parts. MacGregor shook me very cordially by the hand, and detaining me, so as to permit Mr. Jarvie to precede us, a manœuvre for which the narrowness of the road served as an excuse, he said to me, 'You are a kind-hearted and an honourable youth, and understand, doubtless, that which is due to the feelings of a man of honour. But the heather that I have trod upon when living must bloom ower me when I am dead; my heart would sink, and my arm would shrink and wither like fern in the frost, were I to lose sight of my native hills; nor has the world a scene that would console me for the loss of the rocks and cairns, wild as they are, that you see around us. And Helen — what would become of her were I to leave her the subject of new insult and atrocity? or how could she bear to be removed from these scenes where the remembrance of her wrongs is aye sweetened by the recollection of her revenge? I was once so hard put at by my great enemy, as I may well ca' him, that I was forced e'en to gie way to the tide, and removed myself and my people and family from our dwellings in our native land, and to withdraw for a time into MacCallum More's country; and Helen made a lament on our departure as weel as MacRimmon¹ himsell could hae framed it, and so piteously sad and waesome that our hearts amais broke as we sate and listened to her: it was like the wailing of one that mourns for the mother that bore him, the tears came down the rough faces of our gillies as they hearkened; and I wad not have the same touch of heartbreak again -- no,

¹ See Note 14.

not to have all the lands that ever were owned by MacGregor.'

'But your sons,' I said, 'they are at the age when your countrymen have usually no objection to see the world?'

'And I should be content,' he replied, 'that they pushed their fortune in the French or Spanish service, as is the wont of Scottish cavaliers of honour, and last night your plan seemed feasible enough. But I hae seen his Excellency this morning before ye were up.'

'Did he then quarter so near us?' said I, my bosom throbbing with anxiety.

'Nearer than ye thought,' was MacGregor's reply; 'but he seemed rather in some shape to jalouse your speaking to the young leddy, and so you see ——'

'There was no occasion for jealousy,' I answered, with some haughtiness; 'I should not have intruded on his privacy.'

'But ye must not be offended, or look out from amang your curls, then, like a wild-cat out of an ivy-tool, for ye are to understand that he wishes most sincere weel to you, and has proved it. And it's partly that whilk has set the heather on fire e'en now.'

'Heather on fire?' said I. 'I do not understand you.'

'Why,' resumed MacGregor, 'ye ken weel enough that women and gear are at the bottom of a' the mischief in this world. I hae been misdoubting your cousin Rashleigh since ever he saw that he wasna to get Die Vernon for his marrow, and I think he took grudge at his Excellency mainly on that account. But then came the splore about the surrendering your papers; and we hae now gude evidence that, sue soon as he was compelled to yield them up, he rade post to Stirling and tauld the government all, and mair than all, that was gaun dously on amang us hill-folk; and, doubtless, that was the way that the country was laid to take his Excellency and the leddy, and to make sic an unexpected raid on me. And I hae as little doubt that the poor deevil Morris, whom he could gar believe ony thing, was egged on by him and some of the Lowland gentry to trepan me in the gate he tried to do. But if Rashleigh Osbaldistone were baith the last and best of his name, and granting that he and I ever forgather again, the fiend go down my weasand with a bare blade at his belt if we part before my dirk and his best bluid are weel acquainted thegither!'

He pronounced the last threat with an ominous frown, and the appropriate gesture of his hand upon his dagger.

'I should almost rejoice at what has happened,' said I, 'could I hope that Rashleigh's treachery might prove the means of preventing the explosion of the rash and desperate intrigues in which I have long suspected him to be a prime agent.'

'Trow ye na that,' said Rob Roy; 'traitor's word never yet hurt honest cause. He was ower deep in our secrets, that's true; and had it not been so, Stirling and Edinburgh Castles would have been baith in our hands by this time, or briefly hereafter, whilk is now scarce to be hoped for. But there are ower mony engaged, and far ower gude a cause to be gien up, for the breath of a traitor's tale, and that will be seen and heard of ere it be lang. And so, as I was about to say, the best of my thanks to you for your offer anent my sons, whilk last night I had some thoughts to have embraced in their behalf. But I see that this villain's treason will convince our great folks that they must instantly draw to a head, and make a blow for it, or be taen in their houses, coupled up like hounds, and driven up to London like the honest noblemen and gentlemen in the year seventeen hundred and seven. Civil war is like a cockatrice; we have sitten hatching the egg that held it for ten years, and might hae sitten on for ten years mair, when in comes Rashleigh and chips the shell, and out bangs the wonder amang us, and cries to fire and sword. Now in sic a matter I'll hae need o' a' the hands I can mak; and, nae disparagement to the Kings of France and Spain, whom I wish very weel to, King James is as gude a man as ony o' them, and has the best right to Hamish and Rob, being his natural-born subjects.'

I easily comprehended that these words boded a general national convulsion; and, as it would have been alike useless and dangerous to have combated the political opinions of my guide at such a place and moment, I contented myself with regretting the promiscuous scene of confusion and distress likely to arise from any general exertion in favour of the exiled royal family.

'Let it come, man — let it come,' answered MacGregor; 'ye never saw dull weather clear without a shower; and if the world is turned upside down, why, honest men have the better chance to cut bread out of it.'

I again attempted to bring him back to the subject of Diana; but, although on most occasions and subjects he used a freedom of speech which I had no great delight in listening to, yet upon that alone, which was most interesting to me, he

kept a degree of scrupulous reserve, and contented himself with intimating 'that he hoped the ledly would be soon in a quieter country than this was like to be for one while.' I was obliged to be content with this answer, and to proceed in the hope that accident might, as on a former occasion, stand my friend, and allow me at least the sad gratification of bidding farewell to the object who had occupied such a share of my affections, so much beyond even what I had supposed till I was about to be separated from her for ever.

We pursued the margin of the lake for about six English miles, through a devious and beautifully variegated path, until we attained a sort of Highland farm or assembly of hamlets, near the head of that fine sheet of water called, if I mistake not, Lediart, or some such name. Here a numerous party of MacGregor's men were stationed in order to receive us. The taste as well as the eloquence of tribes in a savage, or, to speak more properly, in a rude state, is usually just because it is unfettered by system and affectation; and of this I had an example in the choice these mountaineers had made of a place to receive their guests. It has been said that a British monarch would judge well to receive the embassy of a rival power in the cabin of a man-of-war; and a Highland leader acted with some propriety in choosing a situation where the natural objects of grandeur proper to his country might have the full effect on the mind of his guests.

We ascended about two hundred yards from the shores of the lake, guided by a brawling brook, and left on the right hand four or five Highland huts, with patches of arable land around them, so small as to show that they must have been worked with the spade rather than the plough, cut as it were out of the surrounding copsewood, and waving with crops of barley and oats. Above this limited space the hill became more steep; and on its edge we descried the glittering arms and waving drapery of about fifty of MacGregor's followers. They were stationed on a spot the recollection of which yet strikes me with admiration. The brook, hurling its waters downwards from the mountain, had in this spot encountered a barrier rock, over which it had made its way by two distinct leaps. The first fall, across which a magnificent old oak, slanting out from the farther bank, partly extended itself as if to shroud the dusky stream of the cascade, might be about twelve feet high; the broken waters were received in a beautiful stone basin, almost as regular as if hewn by a sculptor; and after

wheeling around its flinty margin, they made a second precipitous dash through a dark and narrow chasm, at least fifty feet in depth, and from thence in a hurried, but comparatively a more gentle course, escaped to join the lake.

With the natural taste which belongs to mountaineers, and especially to the Scottish Highlanders, whose feelings I have observed are often allied with the romantic and poetical, Rob Roy's wife and followers had prepared our morning repast in a scene well calculated to impress strangers with some feelings of awe. They are also naturally a grave and proud people, and, however rude in our estimation, carry their ideas of form and politeness to an excess that would appear overstrained, except from the demonstration of superior force which accompanies the display of it; for it must be granted that the air of punctilious deference and rigid etiquette which would seem ridiculous in an ordinary peasant, has, like the salute of a *corps de garde*, a propriety when tendered by a Highlander completely armed. There was, accordingly, a good deal of formality in our approach and reception.

The Highlanders, who had been dispersed on the side of the hill, drew themselves together when we came in view, and, standing firm and motionless, appeared in close column behind three figures, whom I soon recognised to be Helen MacGregor and her two sons. MacGregor himself arranged his attendants in the rear, and, requesting Mr. Jarvie to dismount where the ascent became steep, advanced slowly, marshalling us forward at the head of the troop. As we advanced we heard the wild notes of the bagpipes, which lost their natural discord from being mingled with the dash of the sound of the cascade. When we came close the wife of MacGregor came forward to meet us. Her dress was studiously arranged in a more feminine taste than it had been on the preceding day, but her features wore the same lofty, unbending, and resolute character; and as she folded my friend the Bailie in an unexpected and apparently unwelcome embrace, I could perceive, by the agitation of his wig, his back, and the calves of his legs, that he felt much like to one who feels himself suddenly in the gripe of a she-bear, without being able to distinguish whether the animal is in kindness or in wrath.

'Kinsman,' she said, 'you are welcome; and you too, stranger,' she added, releasing my alarmed companion, who instinctively drew back and settled his wig, and addressing herself to me — 'you also are welcome. You came,' she added,

'to our unhappy country when our bloods were chafed and our hands were red. Excuse the rudeness that gave you a rough welcome, and lay it upon the evil times, and not upon us.' All this was said with the manners of a princess, and in the tone and style of a court. Nor was there the least tincture of that vulgarity which we naturally attach to the Lowland Scottish. There was a strong provincial accentuation, but otherwise the language rendered by Helen MacGregor out of the native and poetical Gaelic into English, which she had acquired as we do learned tongues, but had probably never heard applied to the mean purposes of ordinary life, was graceful, flowing, and declamatory. Her husband, who had in his time played many parts, used a much less elevated and emphatic dialect; but even *his* language rose in purity of expression, as you may have remarked, if I have been accurate in recording it, when the affairs which he discussed were of an important nature; and it appears to me in his case, and in that of some other Highlanders whom I have known, that when familiar and facetious they used the Lowland Scottish dialect, when serious and impassioned their thoughts arranged themselves in the idiom of their native language; and in the latter case, as they uttered the corresponding ideas in English, the expressions sounded wild, elevated, and poetical. In fact the language of passion is almost always pure as well as vehement, and it is no uncommon thing to hear a Scotchman, when overwhelmed by a countryman with a tone of bitter and fluent upbraiding, reply by way of taunt to his adversary, 'You have gotten to your English.'

Be this as it may, the wife of MacGregor invited us to a refreshment spread out on the grass, which abounded with all the good things their mountains could offer, but was clouded by the dark and undisturbed gravity which sat on the brow of our hostess, as well as by our deep and anxious recollection of what had taken place on the preceding day. It was in vain that the leader exerted himself to excite mirth. A chill hung over our minds as if the feast had been funereal; and every bosom felt light when it was ended.

'Adieu, cousin,' she said to Mr. Jarvie, as we rose from the entertainment; 'the best wish Helen MacGregor can give to a friend is, that he may see her no more.'

The Bailie struggled to answer, probably with some commonplace maxim of morality; but the calm and melancholy sternness of her countenance bore down and disconcerted the

mechanical and formal importance of the magistrate. He coughed, hemmed, bowed, and was silent. 'For you, stranger,' she said, 'I have a token from one whom you can never —'

'Helen,' interrupted MacGregor, in a loud and stern voice, 'what means this? have you forgotten the charge?'

'MacGregor,' she replied, 'I have forgotten nought that is fitting for me to remember. It is not such hands as these,' and she stretched forth her long, sinewy, and bare arm, 'that are fitting to convey love-tokens, were the gift connected with aught but misery. Young man,' she said, presenting me with a ring, which I well remembered as one of the few ornaments that Miss Vernon sometimes wore, 'this comes from one whom you will never see more. If it is a joyless token, it is well fitted to pass through the hands of one to whom joy can never be known. Her last words were — "Let him forget me for ever."'

'And can she,' I said, almost without being conscious that I spoke, 'suppose that is possible?'

'All may be forgotten,' said the extraordinary female who addressed me — 'all, but the sense of dishonour and the desire of vengeance.'

'*Seid suas!*' cried the MacGregor, stamping with impatience. The bagpipes sounded, and with their thrilling and jarring tones cut short our conference. Our leave of our hostess was taken by silent gestures; and we resumed our journey, with an additional proof on my part that I was beloved by Diana and was separated from her for ever.

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BEN LOMOND AND LOCH LOMOND FROM INCHTAVANNAGH.



CHAPTER XXXVI

Farewell to the land where the clouds love to rest,
Like the shroud of the dead, on the mountain's cold breast;
To the cataract's roar where the eagles reply,
And the lake her lone bosom expands to the sky.

OUR route lay through a dreary yet romantic country, which the distress of my own mind prevented me from remarking particularly, and which, therefore, I will not attempt to describe. The lofty peak of Ben Lomond, here the predominant monarch of the mountains, lay on our right hand and served as a striking landmark. I was not awakened from my apathy until, after a long and toilsome walk, we emerged through a pass in the hills and Loch Lomond opened before us. I will spare you the attempt to describe what you would hardly comprehend without going to see it. But certainly this noble lake, boasting innumerable beautiful islands, of every varying form and outline which fancy can frame, its northern extremity narrowing until it is lost among dusky and retreating mountains, while, gradually widening as it extends to the southward, it spreads its base around the indentures and promontories of a fair and fertile land, affords one of the most surprising, beautiful, and sublime spectacles in nature. The eastern side, peculiarly rough and rugged, was at this time the chief seat of MacGregor and his clan, to curb whom a small garrison had been stationed in a central position betwixt Loch Lomond and another lake. The extreme strength of the country, however, with the numerous passes, marshes, caverns, and other places of concealment or defence, made the establishment of this little fort seem rather an acknowledgment of the danger than an effectual means of securing against it.

On more than one occasion, as well as on that which I witnessed, the garrison suffered from the adventurous spirit of the outlaw and his followers. These advantages were never sullied by ferocity when he himself was in command; for,

equally good-tempered and sagacious, he understood well the danger of incurring unnecessary odium. I learnt with pleasure that he had caused the captives of the preceding day to be liberated in safety; and many traits of mercy, and even generosity, are recorded of this remarkable man on similar occasions.

A boat waited for us in a creek beneath a huge rock, manned by four lusty Highland rowers; and our host took leave of us with great cordiality, and even affection. Betwixt him and Mr. Jarvie, indeed, there seemed to exist a degree of mutual regard which formed a strong contrast to their different occupations and habits. After kissing each other very lovingly, and when they were just in the act of parting, the Bailie, in the fulness of his heart, and with a faltering voice, assured his kinsman, 'that if ever an hundred pund, or even twa hundred, would put him or his family in a settled way, he need but just send a line to the Saut Market'; and Rob, grasping his basket-hilt with one hand and shaking Mr. Jarvie's heartily with the other, protested, 'that if ever any body should affront his kinsman, an he would but let him ken, he would stow his lugs out of his head, were he the best man in Glasgow.'

With these assurances of mutual aid and continued goodwill, we bore away from the shore, and took our course for the south-western angle of the lake, where it gives birth to the river Leven. Rob Roy remained for some time standing on the rock from beneath which we had departed, conspicuous by his long gun, waving tartans, and the single plume in his cap which in those days denoted the Highland gentleman and soldier; although I observe the present military taste has decorated the Highland bonnet with a quantity of black plumage, resembling that which is borne before funerals. At length, as the distance increased between us, we saw him turn and go slowly up the side of the hill, followed by his immediate attendants or body-guard.

We performed our voyage for a long time in silence, interrupted only by the Gaelic chant which one of the rowers sung in low irregular measure, rising occasionally into a wild chorus, in which the others joined.

My own thoughts were sad enough; yet I felt something soothing in the magnificent scenery with which I was surrounded; and thought, in the enthusiasm of the moment, that, had my faith been that of Rome, I could have consented to live and die a lonely hermit in one of the romantic and beautiful islands amongst which our boat glided.

The Bailie had also his speculations, but they were of somewhat a different complexion, as I found when, after about an hour's silence, during which he had been mentally engaged in the calculations necessary, he undertook to prove the possibility of draining the lake, and 'giving to plough and harrow many hundred, ay, many a thousand acres, from whilk no man could get earthly gude e'enow, unless it were a gedd¹ or a dish of perch now and then.'

Amidst a long discussion, which he 'crammed into mine ear against the stomach of my sense,' I only remember that it was part of his project to preserve a portion of the lake just deep enough and broad enough for the purposes of water-carriage, so that coal-barges and gabbards should pass as easily between Dumbarton and Glenfalloch as between Glasgow and Greenock.

At length we neared our distant place of landing, adjoining to the ruins of an ancient castle, and just where the lake discharges its superfluous waters into the Leven. There we found Dougal with the horses. The Bailie had formed a plan with respect to 'the creature' as well as upon the draining of the lake, and, perhaps, in both cases with more regard to the utility than to the practical possibility of his scheme. 'Dougal,' he said, 'ye are a kindly creature, and hae the sense and feeling o' what is due to your betters; and I'm e'en wae for you, Dougal, for it canna be but that in the life ye lead you suld get a Jeddart cast² ae day, suner or later. I trust, considering my services as a magistrate and my father the deacon's afore me, I hae interest enough in the council to gar them wink a wee at a waur faut than yours. Sae I hae been thinking that, if ye will gang back to Glasgow wi' us, being a strong-backit creature, ye might be employed in the warehouse till something better suld cast up.'

'Her nainsell muckle obliged till the Bailie's honour,' replied Dougal; 'but teil be in her shanks fan she gangs on a causeway'd street, unless she be drawn up the Gallowgate wi' tows, as she was before.'

In fact, I afterwards learned that Dougal had originally come to Glasgow as a prisoner, from being concerned in some depredation, but had somehow found such favour in the eyes of the jailor that, with rather overweening confidence, he had retained him in his service as one of the turnkeys, a task which Dougal had discharged with sufficient fidelity, so far as was

¹ A pike.

² See Note 15.

known, until overcome by his clannish prejudices on the unexpected appearance of his old leader.

Astonished at receiving so round a refusal to so favourable an offer, the Bailie, turning to me, observed that the 'creature was a natural-born idiot.' I testified my own gratitude in a way which Dougal much better relished, by slipping a couple of guineas into his hand. He no sooner felt the touch of the gold than he sprung twice or thrice from the earth with the agility of a wild buck, flinging out first one heel and then another, in a manner which would have astonished a French dancing-master. He ran to the boatmen to show them the prize, and a small gratuity made them take part in his raptures. He then, to use a favourite expression of the dramatic John Bunyan, 'went on his way, and I saw him no more.'

The Bailie and I mounted our horses and proceeded on the road to Glasgow. When we had lost the view of the lake and its superb amphitheatre of mountains, I could not help expressing with enthusiasm my sense of its natural beauties, although I was conscious that Mr. Jarvie was a very uncongenial spirit to communicate with on such a subject.

'Ye are a young gentleman,' he replied, 'and an Englishman, and a' this may be very fine to you; but for me, wha am a plain man and ken something o' the different values of land. I wadna gie the finest sight we hae seen in the Hielands for the first keek o' the Gorbals o' Glasgow; and if I were ance there it suldna be every fule's errand—begging your pardon, Mr. Francis—that suld take me out o' sight o' Saint Mungo's steeple again!'

The honest man had his wish; for, by dint of travelling very late, we arrived at his own house that night, or rather on the succeeding morning. Having seen my worthy fellow-traveller safely consigned to the charge of the considerate and officious Mattie, I proceeded to Mrs. Flyter's, in whose house, even at this unwonted hour, light was still burning. The door was opened by no less a person than Andrew Fairservice himself, who, upon the first sound of my voice, set up a loud shout of joyful recognition, and, without uttering a syllable, ran upstairs towards a parlour on the second floor, from the windows of which the light proceeded. Justly conceiving that he went to announce my return to the anxious Owen, I followed him upon the foot. Owen was not alone: there was another in the apartment, it was my father.

The first impulse was to preserve the dignity of his usual

equanimity -- 'Francis, I am glad to see you.' The next was to embrace me tenderly -- 'My dear, dear son!' Owen secured one of my hands and wetted it with his tears, while he joined in gratulating my return. These are scenes which address themselves to the eye and to the heart rather than to the ear. My old eyelids still moisten at the recollection of our meeting; but your kind and affectionate feelings can well imagine what I should find it impossible to describe.

When the tumult of our joy was over I learnt that my father had arrived from Holland shortly after Owen had set off for Scotland. Determined and rapid in all his movements, he only stopped to provide the means of discharging the obligations incumbent on his house. By his extensive resources, with funds enlarged and credit fortified by eminent success in his continental speculation, he easily accomplished what perhaps his absence alone rendered difficult, and set out for Scotland to exact justice from Rashleigh Osbaldistone, as well as to put order to his affairs in that country. My father's arrival in full credit, and with the ample means of supporting his engagements honourably, as well as benefiting his correspondents in future, was a stunning blow to MacVittie and Company, who had conceived his star set for ever. Highly incensed at the usage his confidential clerk and agent had received at their hands, Mr. Osbaldistone refused every tender of apology and accommodation; and, having settled the balance of their account, announced to them that, with all its numerous contingent advantages, that leaf of their ledger was closed for ever.

While he enjoyed this triumph over false friends, he was not a little alarmed on my account. Owen, good man, had not supposed it possible that a journey of fifty or sixty miles, which may be made with so much ease and safety in any direction from London, could be attended with any particular danger. But he caught alarm, by sympathy, from my father, to whom the country and the lawless character of its inhabitants were better known.

These apprehensions were raised to agony when, a few hours before I arrived, Andrew Fairservice made his appearance, with a dismal and exaggerated account of the uncertain state in which he had left me. The nobleman with whose troops he had been a sort of prisoner had, after examination, not only dismissed him, but furnished him with the means of returning rapidly to Glasgow, in order to announce to my friends my precarious and unpleasant situation.

Andrew was one of those persons who have no objection to the sort of temporary attention and woeful importance which attaches itself to the bearer of bad tidings, and had therefore by no means smoothed down his tale in the telling, especially as the rich London merchant himself proved unexpectedly one of the auditors. He went at great length into an account of the dangers I had escaped, chiefly, as he insinuated, by means of his own experience, exertion, and sagacity.

'What was to come of me now, when my better angel, in his (Andrew's) person, was removed from my side, it was,' he said, 'sad and sair to conjecture; that the Bailie was nae better than just naebody at a pinch, or something waur, for he was a conceited body, and Andrew hated conceit; but certainly atween the pistols and the carabines of the troopers, that rappit aff the tane after the tother as fast as hail, and the dirks and claymores o' the Hielanders, and the deep waters and weils o' the Avondow, it was to be thought there wad be a puir account of the young gentleman.'

This statement would have driven Owen to despair had he been alone and unsupported; but my father's perfect knowledge of mankind enabled him easily to appreciate the character of Andrew, and the real amount of his intelligence. Stripped of all exaggeration, however, it was alarming enough to a parent. He determined to set out in person to obtain my liberty, by ransom or negotiation, and was busied with Owen till a late hour, in order to get through some necessary correspondence, and devolve on the latter some business which should be transacted during his absence; and thus it chanced that I found them watchers.

It was late ere we separated to rest, and, too impatient long to endure repose, I was stirring early the next morning. Andrew gave his attendance at my levee, as in duty bound, and, instead of the scarecrow figure to which he had been reduced at Aberfoil, now appeared in the attire of an undertaker a goodly suit, namely, of the deepest mourning. It was not till after one or two queries, which the rascal affected as long as he could to misunderstand, that I found out he 'had thought it but decent to put on mourning on account of my inexpressible loss; and, as the broker at whose shop he had equipped himself declined to receive the goods again, and as his own garments had been destroyed or carried off in my honour's service, doubtless I and my honourable father, whom Providence had blessed wi' the means, wadna suffer a puir lad to sit down

wi' the loss; a stand o' claes was nae great matter to an Oshaldistone, he praised for 't! especially to an auld and attached servant o' the house.'

As there was something of justice in Andrew's plea of loss in my service, his finesse succeeded; and he came by a good suit of mourning, with a beaver and all things conforming, as the exterior signs of woe for a master who was alive and merry.

My father's first care, when he arose, was to visit Mr. Jarvie, for whose kindness he entertained the most grateful sentiments, which he expressed in very few, but manly and nervous terms. He explained the altered state of his affairs, and offered the Bailie, on such terms as could not but be both advantageous and acceptable, that part in his concerns which had been hitherto managed by MacVittie and Company. The Bailie heartily congratulated my father and Owen on the changed posture of their affairs, and, without affecting to disclaim that he had done his best to serve them, when matters looked otherwise, he said, 'He had only just acted as he wad be done by; that, as to the extension of their correspondence, he frankly accepted it with thanks. Had MacVittie's folk behaved like honest men,' he said, 'he wad hae liked ill to hae come in ahint them and out afore them, this gate. But it's otherwise, and they maun e'en stand the loss.'

The Bailie then pulled me by the sleeve into a corner, and, after again cordially wishing me joy, proceeded in rather an embarrassed tone: 'I wad heartily wish, Maister Francis, there suld be as little said as possible about the queer things we saw up yonder awa. There's nae gude, unless aye were judicially examine, to say ony thing about that awfu' job o' Morris; and the members o' the council wadna think it creditable in aye of their body to be fighting wi' a wheen Hielan'men, and singeing their plaidens. And abune a', though I am a decent sponsible man when I am on my right end, I canna but think I maun hae made a queer figure without my hat and my periwig, hinging by the middle like bawdrons, or a cloak flung ower a cloak-pin. Bailie Grahame wad hae an unco hair in my neck an he got that tale by the end.'

I could not suppress a smile when I recollected the Bailie's situation, although I certainly thought it no laughing matter at the time. The good-natured merchant was a little confused, but smiled also when he shook his head. 'I see how it is -- I see how it is. But say naething about it, there's a gude callant; and charge that lang-tongued, conceited, upsetting

serving-man o' yours to say naething neither. I wadna for ever sae muckle that even the lassock Mattie kend ony thing about it. I wad never hear an end o't.'

He was obviously relieved from his impending fears of ridicule when I told him it was my father's intention to leave Glasgow almost immediately. Indeed, he had now no motive for remaining, since the most valuable part of the papers carried off by Rashleigh had been recovered. For that portion which he had converted into cash and expended in his own or on political intrigues, there was no mode of recovering it but by a suit at law, which was forthwith commenced, and proceeded, as our law agents assured us, with all deliberate speed.

We spent, accordingly, one hospitable day with the Bailie, and took leave of him, as this narrative now does. He continued to grow in wealth, honour, and credit, and actually rose to the highest civic honours in his native city. About two years after the period I have mentioned, he tired of his bachelor life, and promoted Mattie from her wheel by the kitchen fire to the upper end of his table, in the character of Mrs. Jarvie. Bailie Grahame, the MacVitties, and others (for all men have their enemies, especially in the council of a royal burgh) ridiculed this transformation. 'But,' said Mr. Jarvie, 'let them say their say. I'll ne'er fash mysell, nor lose my liking for sae feckless a matter as a nine days' clash. My honest father the deacon had a byeword,

Brent brow and lily skin,
A loving heart and a leal within,
Is better than gowd or gentle kin.

Besides,' as he always concluded, 'Mattie was nae ordinary lassock quean; she was akin to the Laird o' Limmerfield.'

Whether it was owing to her descent or her good gifts I do not presume to decide; but Mattie behaved excellently in her exaltation, and relieved the apprehensions of some of the Bailie's friends, who had deemed his experiment somewhat hazardous. I do not know that there was any other incident of his quiet and useful life worthy of being particularly recorded.

CHAPTER XXXVII

'Come ye hither, my "six" good sons,
Gallant men I trow ye be,
How many of you, my children dear,
Will stand by that good Earl and me?'

'Five' of them did answer make —
'Five' of them spoke hastily,
'O father, till the day we die,
We'll stand by that good Earl and thee.'

The Rising in the North.

ON the morning when we were to depart from Glasgow, Andrew Fairservice bounced into my apartment like a madman, jumping up and down, and singing, with more vehemence than tune,

'The kiln's on fire — the kiln's on fire —
The kiln's on fire, she's a' in a lowe.'

With some difficulty I prevailed on him to cease his confounded clamour and explain to me what the matter was. He was pleased to inform me, as if he had been bringing the finest news imaginable, 'that the Hielands were clean broken out every man o' them, and that Rob Roy and a' his breeless bands wad be down upon Glasgow or twenty-four hours o' the clock gaed round.'

'Hold your tongue,' said I, 'you rascal! You must be drunk or mad; and if there is any truth in your news, is it a singing matter, you scoundrel?'

'Drunk or mad! nae doubt,' replied Andrew, dauntlessly; 'ane's aye drunk or mad if he tells what grit folks dinna like to hear. Sing! odd, the clans will make us sing on the wrang side o' our mouth, if we are sae drunk or mad as to bide their coming.'

I rose in great haste, and found my father and Owen also on foot, and in considerable alarm.

Andrew's news proved but too true in the main. The great rebellion which agitated Britain in the year 1715 had already broken out, by the unfortunate Earl of Mar's setting up the standard of the Stuart family in an ill-omened hour, to the ruin of many honourable families, both in England and Scotland. The treachery of some of the Jacobite agents (Rashleigh among the rest), and the arrest of others, had made George the First's government acquainted with the extensive ramifications of a conspiracy long prepared, and which at last exploded prematurely, and in a part of the kingdom too distant to have any vital effect upon the country, which, however, was plunged into much confusion.

This great public event served to confirm and elucidate the obscure explanations I had received from MacGregor; and I could easily see why the westland clans who were brought against him should have waived their private quarrel in consideration that they were all shortly to be engaged in the same public cause. It was a more melancholy reflection to my mind that Diana Vernon was the wife of one of those who were most active in turning the world upside down, and that she was herself exposed to all the privations and perils of her husband's hazardous trade.

We held an immediate consultation on the measures we were to adopt in this crisis, and acquiesced in my father's plan that we should instantly get the necessary passports and make the best of our way to London. I acquainted my father with my wish to offer my personal service to the government in any volunteer corps, several being already spoken of. He readily acquiesced in my proposal; for, though he disliked war as a profession, yet upon principle no man would have exposed his life more willingly in defence of civil and religious liberty.

We travelled in haste and in peril through Dumfries-shire and the neighbouring counties of England. In this quarter gentlemen of the Tory interest were already in motion, mustering men and horses, while the Whigs assembled themselves in the principal towns, armed the inhabitants, and prepared for civil war. We narrowly escaped being stopped on more occasions than one, and were often compelled to take circuitous routes to avoid the points where forces were assembling.

When we reached London we immediately associated with those bankers and eminent merchants who agreed to support the credit of government, and to meet that run upon the funds on which the conspirators had greatly founded their hopes of

furthering their undertaking, by rendering the government, as it were, bankrupt. My father was chosen one of the members of this formidable body of the monied interest, as all had the greatest confidence in his zeal, skill, and activity. He was also the organ by which they communicated with government, and contrived, from funds belonging to his own house, or over which he had command, to find purchasers for a quantity of the national stock, which was suddenly flung into the market at a depreciated price when the rebellion broke out. I was not idle myself, but obtained a commission, and levied at my father's expense about two hundred men, with whom I joined General Carpenter's army.

The rebellion in the meantime had extended itself to England. The unfortunate Earl of Derwentwater had taken arms in the cause along with General Forster. My poor uncle, Sir Hildebrand, whose estate was reduced to almost nothing by his own carelessness and the expense and debauchery of his sons and household, was easily persuaded to join that unfortunate standard. Before doing so, however, he exhibited a degree of precaution of which no one could have suspected him : he made his will !

By this document he devised his estates at Osbaldistone Hall, and so forth, to his sons successively, and their male heirs, until he came to Rashleigh, whom, on account of the turn he had lately taken in politics, he detested with all his might ; he cut him off with a shilling, and settled the estate on me, as his next heir. I had always been rather a favourite of the old gentleman ; but it is probable that, confident in the number of gigantic youths who now armed around him, he considered the destination as likely to remain a dead letter, which he inserted chiefly to show his displeasure at Rashleigh's treachery, both public and domestic. There was an article by which he bequeathed to the niece of his late wife, Diana Vernon, now Lady Diana Vernon Beauchamp, some diamonds belonging to her late aunt, and a great silver ewer, having the arms of Vernon and Osbaldistone quarterly engraven upon it.

But Heaven had decreed a more speedy extinction of his numerous and healthy lineage than, most probably, he himself had reckoned on. In the very first muster of the conspirators at a place called Green Rigg, Thorncliff Osbaldistone quarrelled about precedence with a gentleman of the Northumbrian border, to the full as fierce and intractable as himself. In spite of all remonstrances, they gave their commander a specimen of how

far their discipline might be relied upon, by fighting it out with their rapiers, and my kinsman was killed on the spot. His death was a great loss to Sir Hildebrand, for, notwithstanding his infernal temper, he had a grain or two of more sense than belonged to the rest of the brotherhood, Rashleigh always excepted.

Percival, the sot, died also in his calling. He had a wager with another gentleman, who, from his exploits in that line, had acquired the formidable epithet of Brandy Swalewell, which should drink the largest cup of strong liquor when King James was proclaimed by the insurgents at Morpeth. The exploit was something enormous. I forget the exact quantity of brandy which Percie swallowed, but it occasioned a fever, of which he expired at the end of three days, with the word, 'Water, water,' perpetually on his tongue.

Dickon broke his neck near Warrington Bridge, in an attempt to show off a foundered blood-mare, which he wished to palm upon a Manchester merchant who had joined the insurgents. He pushed the animal at a five-barred gate; she fell in the leap, and the unfortunate jockey lost his life.

Wilfred, the fool, as sometimes befalls, had the best fortune of the family. He was slain at Proud Preston, in Lancashire, on the day that General Carpenter attacked the barricades, fighting with great bravery, though I have heard he was never able exactly to comprehend the cause of quarrel, and did not uniformly remember on which king's side he was engaged. John also behaved very boldly in the same engagement, and received several wounds, of which he was not happy enough to die on the spot.

Old Sir Hildebrand, entirely broken-hearted by these successive losses, became, by the next day's surrender, one of the unhappy prisoners, and was lodged in Newgate with his wounded son John.

I was now released from my military duty, and lost no time, therefore, in endeavouring to relieve the distresses of these near relations. My father's interest with government, and the general compassion excited by a parent who had sustained the successive loss of so many sons within so short a time, would have prevented my uncle and cousin from being brought to trial for high treason; but their doom was given forth from a greater tribunal. John died of his wounds in Newgate, recommending to me, with his last breath, a cast of hawks which he had at the Hall, and a black spaniel bitch, called Lucy.

My poor uncle seemed beaten down to the very earth by his family calamities, and the circumstances in which he unexpectedly found himself. He said little, but seemed grateful for such attentions as circumstances permitted me to show him. I did not witness his meeting with my father for the first time for so many years, and under circumstances so melancholy; but, judging from my father's extreme depression of spirits, it must have been melancholy in the last degree. Sir Hildebrand spoke with great bitterness against Rashleigh, now his only surviving child; laid upon him the ruin of his house and the deaths of all his brethren, and declared that neither he nor they would have plunged into political intrigue but for that very member of his family who had been the first to desert them. He once or twice mentioned Diana, always with great affection; and once he said, while I sate by his bedside — 'Nevoy, since Thorncliff and all of them are dead, I am sorry you cannot have her.'

The expression affected me much at the time; for it was a usual custom of the poor old Baronet's, when joyously setting forth upon the morning's chase, to distinguish Thorncliff, who was a favourite, while he summoned the rest more generally; and the loud jolly tone in which he used to halloo, 'Call Thornie, call all of them,' contrasted sadly with the woebegone and self-abandoning note in which he uttered the disconsolate words which I have above quoted. He mentioned the contents of his will, and supplied me with an authenticated copy; the original he had deposited with my old acquaintance, Mr. Justice Inglewood, who, dreaded by no one and confided in by all as a kind of neutral person, had become, for aught I know, the depositary of half the wills of the fighting men of both factions in the county of Northumberland.

The greater part of my uncle's last hours were spent in the discharge of the religious duties of his church, in which he was directed by the chaplain of the Sardinian ambassador, for whom, with some difficulty, we obtained permission to visit him. I could not ascertain by my own observation, or through the medical attendants, that Sir Hildebrand Osbaldistone died of any formed complaint bearing a name in the science of medicine. He seemed to me completely worn out and broken down by fatigue of body and distress of mind, and rather ceased to exist than died of any positive struggle; just as a vessel, buffeted and tossed by a succession of tempestuous gales, her timbers overstrained and her joints loosened, will sometimes spring a

leak and founder when there are no apparent causes for her destruction.

It was a remarkable circumstance that my father, after the last duties were performed to his brother, appeared suddenly to imbibe a strong anxiety that I should act upon the will and represent his father's house, which had hitherto seemed to be the thing in the world which had least charms for him. But formerly he had been only like the fox in the fable, contemning what was beyond his reach; and, moreover, I doubt not that the excessive dislike which he entertained against Rashleigh (now Sir Rashleigh) Osbaldistone, who loudly threatened to attack his father Sir Hildebrand's will and settlement, corroborated my father's desire to maintain it.

'He had been most unjustly disinherited,' he said, 'by his own father; his brother's will had repaired the disgrace, if not the injury, by leaving the wreck of the property to Frank, the natural heir, and he was determined the bequest should take effect.'

In the meantime Rashleigh was not altogether a contemptible personage as an opponent. The information he had given to government was critically well-timed, and his extreme plausibility, with the extent of his intelligence, and the artful manner in which he contrived to assume both merit and influence, had to a certain extent procured him patrons among ministers. We were already in the full tide of litigation with him on the subject of his pillaging the firm of Osbaldistone and Tresham, and, judging from the progress we made in that comparatively simple lawsuit, there was a chance that this second course of litigation might be drawn out beyond the period of all our natural lives.

To avert these delays as much as possible, my father, by the advice of his counsel learned in the law, paid off and vested in my person the rights to certain large mortgages affecting Osbaldistone Hall. Perhaps, however, the opportunity to convert a great share of the large profits which accrued from the rapid rise of the funds upon the suppression of the rebellion, and the experience he had so lately had of the perils of commerce, encouraged him to realise in this manner a considerable part of his property. At any rate it so chanced that, instead of commanding me to the desk, as I fully expected, having intimated my willingness to comply with his wishes, however they might destine me, I received his directions to go down to Osbaldistone Hall and take possession of it as the heir and

representative of the family. I was directed to apply to Squire Inglewood for the copy of my uncle's will deposited with him, and take all necessary measures to secure that possession which sages say makes nine points of the law.

At another time I should have been delighted with this change of destination. But now Osbaldistone Hall was accompanied with many painful recollections. Still, however, I thought that in that neighbourhood only I was likely to acquire some information respecting the fate of Diana Vernon. I had every reason to fear it must be far different from what I could have wished it. But I could obtain no precise information on the subject.

It was in vain that I endeavoured, by such acts of kindness as their situation admitted, to conciliate the confidence of some distant relations who were among the prisoners in Newgate. A pride which I could not condemn, and a natural suspicion of the Whig, Frank Osbaldistone, cousin to the double-distilled traitor Rashleigh, closed every heart and tongue, and I only received thanks, cold and extorted, in exchange for such benefits as I had power to offer. The arm of the law was also gradually abridging the numbers of those whom I endeavoured to serve, and the hearts of the survivors became gradually more contracted towards all whom they conceived to be concerned with the existing government. As they were led gradually, and by detachments, to execution, those who survived lost interest in mankind, and the desire of communicating with them. I shall long remember what one of them, Ned Shafton by name, replied to my anxious inquiry whether there was any indulgence I could procure him. 'Mr. Frank Osbaldistone, I must suppose you mean me kindly, and therefore I thank you. But, by G—d, men cannot be fattened like poultry when they see their neighbours carried off day by day to the place of execution, and know that their own necks are to be twisted round in their turn.'

Upon the whole, therefore, I was glad to escape from London, from Newgate, and from the scenes which both exhibited, to breathe the free air of Northumberland. Andrew Fairservice had continued in my service more from my father's pleasure than my own. At present there seemed a prospect that his local acquaintance with Osbaldistone Hall and its vicinity might be useful; and, of course, he accompanied me on my journey, and I enjoyed the prospect of getting rid of him by establishing him in his old quarters. I cannot conceive how he could prevail upon my father to interest himself in him,

unless it were by the art, which he possessed in no inconsiderable degree, of affecting an extreme attachment to his master, which theoretical attachment he made compatible in practice with playing all manner of tricks without scruple, providing only against his master being cheated by any one but himself.

We performed our journey to the North without any remarkable adventure, and we found the country, so lately agitated by rebellion, now peaceful and in good order. The nearer we approached to Osbaldistone Hall, the more did my heart sink at the thought of entering that deserted mansion; so that, in order to postpone the evil day, I resolved first to make my visit at Mr. Justice Inglewood's.

That venerable person had been much disturbed with thoughts of what he had been and what he now was; and natural recollections of the past had interfered considerably with the active duty which, in his present situation, might have been expected from him. He was fortunate, however, in one respect: he had got rid of his clerk, Jobson, who had finally left him in dudgeon at his inactivity, and become legal assistant to a certain Squire Standish, who had lately commenced operations in those parts as a justice, with a zeal for King George and the Protestant succession which, very different from the feelings of his old patron, Mr. Jobson had more occasion to restrain within the bounds of the law than to stimulate to exertion.

Old Justice Inglewood received me with great courtesy, and readily exhibited my uncle's will, which seemed to be without a flaw. He was for some time in obvious distress how he should speak and act in my presence; but when he found that, though a supporter of the present government upon principle, I was disposed to think with pity on those who had opposed it on a mistaken feeling of loyalty and duty, his discourse became a very diverting medley of what he had done and what he had left undone — the pains he had taken to prevent some squires from joining, and to wink at the escape of others, who had been so unlucky as to engage in the affair.

We were *tête-à-tête*, and several bumpers had been quaffed by the Justice's special desire, when on a sudden he requested me to fill a *bona fide* brimmer to the health of poor dear Die Vernon, the rose of the wilderness, the heath-bell of Cheviot, and the blossom that's transplanted to an infernal convent.

'Is not Miss Vernon married, then?' I exclaimed, in great astonishment. 'I thought his Excellency ——'

'Pooh! pooh! his Excellency and his Lordship's all a humbug now, you know — mere St. Germain's titles; Earl of Beauchamp and ambassador plenipotentiary from France, when the Duke Regent of Orleans scarce knew that he lived, I daresay! But you must have seen old Sir Frederick Vernon at the Hall, when he played the part of Father Vaughan?'

'Good Heavens! then Vaughan was Miss Vernon's father!'

'To be sure he was,' said the Justice, coolly. 'There's no use in keeping the secret now, for he must be out of the country by this time; otherwise, no doubt, it would be my duty to apprehend him. Come, off with your bumper to my dear lost Die!'

And let her health go round, around, around,
And let her health go round;
For though your stocking be of silk,
Your knees near kiss the ground, aground, aground.¹

I was unable, as the reader may easily conceive, to join in the Justice's jollity. My head swam with the shock I had received. 'I never heard,' I said, 'that Miss Vernon's father was living.'

'It was not our government's fault that he is,' replied Inglewood, 'for the devil a man there is whose head would have brought more money. He was condemned to death for Fenwick's plot, and was thought to have had some hand in the Knightsbridge affair, in King William's time; and, as he had married in Scotland a relation of the house of Breadalbane, he possessed great influence with all their chiefs. There was a talk of his being demanded to be given up at the Peace of Ryswick, but he shammed ill, and his death was given publicly out in the French papers. But when he came back here on the old score, we old Cavaliers knew him well — that is to say, I knew him, not as being a Cavalier myself — but no information being lodged against the poor gentleman, and my memory being shortened by frequent attacks of the gout, I could not have sworn to him, you know.'

'Was he, then, not known at Osbaldistone Hall?' I inquired.

'To none but to his daughter, the old knight, and Rashleigh, who had got at that secret as he did at every one else, and held it like a twisted cord about poor Die's neck. I have seen her one hundred times she would have spit at him, if it had not been fear for her father, whose life would not have been worth

¹ This pithy verse occurs, it is believed, in Shadwell's play of *Bury Fair*.

five minutes' purchase if he had been discovered to the government. But don't mistake me, Mr. Osbaldistone; I say the government is a good, a gracious, and a just government; and if it has hanged one-half of the rebels, poor things, all will acknowledge they would not have been touched had they staid peaceably at home.'

Waiving the discussion of these political questions, I brought back Mr. Inglewood to his subject, and I found that Diana, having positively refused to marry any of the Osbaldistone family, and expressed her particular detestation of Rashleigh, he had from that time begun to cool in zeal for the cause of the Pretender; to which, as the youngest of six brethren, and bold, artful, and able, he had hitherto looked forward as the means of making his fortune. Probably the compulsion with which he had been forced to render up the spoils which he had abstracted from my father's counting-house, by the united authority of Sir Frederick Vernon and the Scottish Chiefs, had determined his resolution to advance his progress by changing his opinions and betraying his trust. Perhaps also, for few men were better judges where his interest was concerned, he considered their means and talents to be, as they afterwards proved, greatly inadequate to the important task of overthrowing an established government. Sir Frederick Vernon, or, as he was called among the Jacobites, his Excellency Viscount Beauchamp, had, with his daughter, some difficulty in escaping the consequences of Rashleigh's information. Here Mr. Inglewood's information was at fault; but he did not doubt, since we had not heard of Sir Frederick being in the hands of the government, he must be by this time abroad, where, agreeable to the cruel bond he had entered into with his brother-in-law, Diana, since she had declined to select a husband out of the Osbaldistone family, must be confined to a convent. The original cause of this singular agreement Mr. Inglewood could not perfectly explain; but he understood it was a family compact, entered into for the purpose of securing to Sir Frederick the rents of the remnant of his large estates, which had been vested in the Osbaldistone family by some legal manœuvre. In short, a family compact, in which, like many of those undertaken at that time of day, the feelings of the principal parties interested were no more regarded than if they had been a part of the live stock upon the lands.

I cannot tell, such is the waywardness of the human heart, whether this intelligence gave me joy or sorrow. It seemed to

me that, in the knowledge that Miss Vernon was eternally divided from me, not by marriage with another, but by seclusion in a convent, in order to fulfil an absurd bargain of this kind, my regret for her loss was aggravated rather than diminished. I became dull, low-spirited, absent, and unable to support the task of conversing with Justice Inglewood, who in his turn yawned, and proposed to retire early. I took leave of him over night, determining the next day, before breakfast, to ride over to Osbaldistone Hall.

Mr. Inglewood acquiesced in my proposal. 'It would be well,' he said, 'that I made my appearance there before I was known to be in the country, the more especially as Sir Rashleigh Osbaldistone was now, he understood, at Mr. Jobson's house, hatching some mischief doubtless. They were fit company,' he added, 'for each other, Sir Rashleigh having lost all right to mingle in the society of men of honour; but it was hardly possible two such d—d rascals should colloque together without mischief to honest people.'

He concluded by earnestly recommending a toast and tankard, and an attack upon his venison pasty, before I set out in the morning, just to break the cold air on the wolds.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

His master's gone, and no one now
Dwells in the halls of Ivor;
Men, dogs, and horses, all are dead,
He is the sole survivor.

WORDSWORTH.

THERE are few more melancholy sensations than those with which we regard scenes of past pleasure when altered and deserted. In my ride to Osbaldistone Hall I passed the same objects which I had seen in company with Miss Vernon on the day of our memorable ride from Inglewood Place. Her spirit seemed to keep me company on the way; and, when I approached the spot where I had first seen her, I almost listened for the cry of the hounds and the notes of the horn, and strained my eye on vacant space, as if to descry the fair huntress again descend like an apparition from the hill. But all was silent and all was solitary. When I reached the Hall, the closed doors and windows, the grass-grown pavement, the courts, which were now so silent, presented a strong contrast to the gay and bustling scene I had so often seen them exhibit, when the merry hunters were going forth to their morning sport, or returning to the daily festival. The joyous bark of the fox-hounds as they were uncoupled, the cries of the huntsman, the clang of the horses' hoofs, the loud laugh of the old knight at the head of his strong and numerous descendants, were all silenced now and for ever.

While I gazed round the scene of solitude and emptiness, I was inexpressibly affected, even by recollecting those whom, when alive, I had no reason to regard with affection. But the thought that so many youths of goodly presence, warm with life, health, and confidence, were within so short a time cold in the grave, by various, yet all violent and unexpected, modes of death, afforded a picture of mortality at which the mind trembled. It was little consolation to me that I returned

proprietor to the halls which I had left almost like a fugitive. My mind was not habituated to regard the scenes around as my property, and I felt myself an usurper, at least an intruding stranger, and could hardly divest myself of the idea that some of the bulky forms of my deceased kinsmen were, like the gigantic spectres of a romance, to appear in the gateway and dispute my entrance.

While I was engaged in these sad thoughts, my follower, Andrew, whose feelings were of a very different nature, exerted himself in thundering alternately on every door in the building, calling at the same time for admittance, in a tone so loud as to intimate that *he*, at least, was fully sensible of his newly-acquired importance, as squire of the body to the new lord of the manor. At length, timidly and reluctantly, Anthony Syddall, my uncle's aged butler and major-domo, presented himself at a lower window, well fenced with iron bars, and inquired our business.

'We are come to tak your charge aff your hand, my auld friend,' said Andrew Fairservice; 'ye may gie up your keys as sune as ye like; ilka dog has his day. I'll tak the plate and napery aff your hand. Ye hae had your ain time o't, Mr. Syddall; but ilka bean has its black, and ilka path has its puddle; and it will just set you henceforth to sit at the board-end as weel as it did Andrew lang syne.'

Checking with some difficulty the forwardness of my follower, I explained to Syddall the nature of my right, and the title I had to demand admittance into the Hall, as into my own property. The old man seemed much agitated and distressed, and testified manifest reluctance to give me entrance, although it was couched in a humble and submissive tone. I allowed for the agitation of natural feelings, which really did the old man honour; but continued peremptory in my demand of admittance, explaining to him that his refusal would oblige me to apply for Mr. Inglewood's warrant and a constable.

'We are come from Mr. Justice Inglewood's this morning,' said Andrew, to enforce the menace, 'and I saw Archie Rutledge, the constable, as I came up by; the country's no to be lawless as it has been, Mr. Syddall, letting rebels and Papists gang on as they best listed.'

The threat of the law sounded dreadful in the old man's ears, conscious as he was of the suspicion under which he himself lay, from his religion and his devotion to Sir Hilde

brand and his sons. He undid, with fear and trembling, one of the postern entrances, which was secured with many a bolt and bar, and humbly hoped that I would excuse him for fidelity in the discharge of his duty. I reassured him, and told him I had the better opinion of him for his caution.

'Sae have not I,' said Andrew. 'Syddall is an auld sneek-drawer; he wadna be looking as white as a sheet, and his knees knocking thegither, unless it were for something mair than he's like to tell us.'

'Lord forgive you, Mr. Fairservice,' replied the butler, 'to say such things of an old friend and fellow-servant! Where,' following me humbly along the passage — 'where would it be your honour's pleasure to have a fire lighted? I fear me you will find the house very dull and dreary. But perhaps you mean to ride back to Inglewood Place to dinner?'

'Light a fire in the library,' I replied.

'In the library!' answered the old man; 'nobody has sat there this many a day, and the room smokes, for the daws have built in the chimney this spring, and there were no young men about the Hall to pull them down.'

'Our ain reek's better than other folks' fire,' said Andrew; 'his honour likes the library. He's nae o' your Papishers, that delight in blinded ignorance, Mr. Syddall.'

Very reluctantly, as it appeared to me, the butler led the way to the library, and, contrary to what he had given me to expect, the interior of the apartment looked as if it had been lately arranged, and made more comfortable than usual. There was a fire in the grate, which burned clearly, notwithstanding what Syddall had reported of the vent. Taking up the tongs, as if to arrange the wood, but rather perhaps to conceal his own confusion, the butler observed, 'it was burning clear now, but had smoked woundily in the morning.'

Wishing to be alone till I recovered myself from the first painful sensations which everything around me recalled, I desired old Syddall to call the land-steward, who lived at about a quarter of a mile from the Hall. He departed with obvious reluctance. I next ordered Andrew to procure the attendance of a couple of stout fellows upon whom he could rely, the population around being Papists, and Sir Rashleigh, who was capable of any desperate enterprise, being in the neighbourhood. Andrew Fairservice undertook this task with great cheerfulness, and promised to bring me up from Trinlay Knowe 'twa true-blue Presbyterians like himsell, that would face and out-face

baith the Pope, the devil, and the Pretender ; and blythe will I be o' their company mysell, for the very last night that I was at Osbaldistone Hall, the blight be on ilka blossom in my bit yard, if I didna see that very picture (pointing to the full-length portrait of Miss Vernon's grandfather) walking by moonlight in the garden ! I tauld your honour I was fleyed wi' a bogle that night, but ye wadna listen to me ; I aye thought there was witcher-ft and deevilry amang the Papishers, but I ne'er saw 't wi' bodily een till that awfu' night.'

'Get along, sir,' said I, 'and bring the fellows you talk of ; and see they have more sense than yourself, and are not frightened at their own shadow.'

'I hae been counted as gude a man as my neighbours ere now,' said Andrew, petulantly ; 'but I dinna pretend to deal wi' evil spirits.' And so he made his exit, as Wardlaw, the land-steward, made his appearance.

He was a man of sense and honesty, without whose careful management my uncle would have found it difficult to have maintained himself a housekeeper so long as he did. He examined the nature of my right of possession carefully, and admitted it candidly. To any one else the succession would have been a poor one, so much was the land encumbered with debt and mortgage. Most of these, however, were already vested in my father's person, and he was in a train of acquiring the rest ; his large gains, by the recent rise of the funds, having made it a matter of ease and convenience for him to pay off the debt which affected his patrimony.

I transacted much necessary business with Mr. Wardlaw, and detained him to dine with me. We preferred taking our repast in the library, although Syddall strongly recommended our removing to the stone-hall, which he had put in order for the occasion. Meantime Andrew made his appearance with his true-blue recruits, whom he recommended in the highest terms as 'sober decent men, weel founded in doctrinal points, and, above all, as bold as lions.' I ordered them something to drink, and they left the room. I observed old Syddall shake his head as they went out, and insisted upon knowing the reason.

'I maybe cannot expect,' he said, 'that your honour should put confidence in what I say, but it is Heaven's truth for all that. Ambrose Wingfield is as honest a man as lives, but if there is a false knave in the country it is his brother Lancie ; the whole country knows him to be a spy for Clerk Jobson on

the poor gentlemen that have been in trouble. But he's a Dissenter, and I suppose that's enough nowadays.'

Having thus far given vent to his feelings, to which, however, I was little disposed to pay attention, and having placed the wine on the table, the old butler left the apartment.

Mr. Wardlaw, having remained with me until the evening was somewhat advanced, at length bundled up his papers and removed himself to his own habitation, leaving me in that confused state of mind in which we can hardly say whether we desire company or solitude. I had not, however, the choice betwixt them; for I was left alone in the room of all others most calculated to inspire me with melancholy reflections.

As twilight was darkening the apartment, Andrew had the sagacity to advance his head at the door, not to ask if I wished for lights, but to recommend them as a measure of precaution against the bogles, which still haunted his imagination. I rejected his proffer somewhat peevishly, trimmed the wood-fire, and, placing myself in one of the large leathern chairs which flanked the old Gothic chimney, I watched unconsciously the bickering of the blaze which I had fostered. 'And this,' said I alone, 'is the progress and the issue of human wishes! Nursed by the merest trifles, they are first kindled by fancy, nay, are fed upon the vapour of hope till they consume the substance which they inflame; and man, and his hopes, passions, and desires, sink into a worthless heap of embers and ashes!'

There was a deep sigh from the opposite side of the room, which seemed to reply to my reflections. I started up in amazement. Diana Vernon stood before me, resting on the arm of a figure so strongly resembling that of the portrait so often mentioned, that I looked hastily at the frame, expecting to see it empty. My first idea was, either that I had gone suddenly distracted, or that the spirits of the dead had arisen and been placed before me. A second glance convinced me of my being in my senses, and that the forms which stood before me were real and substantial. It was Diana herself, though paler and thinner than her former self; and it was no tenant of the grave who stood beside her, but Vaughan, or rather Sir Frederick Vernon, in a dress made to imitate that of his ancestor, to whose picture his countenance possessed a family resemblance. He was the first that spoke, for Diana kept her eyes fast fixed on the ground, and astonishment actually riveted my tongue to the roof of my mouth.

'We are your suppliants, Mr. Osbaldistone,' he said, 'and

we claim the refuge and protection of your roof till we can pursue a journey where dungeons and death gape for me at every step.'

'Surely,' I articulated with great difficulty, 'Miss Vernon cannot suppose — you, sir, cannot believe, that I have forgot your interference in my difficulties, or that I am capable of betraying any one, much less you?'

'I know it,' said Sir Frederick; 'yet it is with the most inexpressible reluctance that I impose on you a confidence, disagreeable perhaps, certainly dangerous, and which I would have specially wished to have conferred on some one else. But my fate, which has chased me through a life of perils and escapes, is now pressing me hard, and I have no alternative.'

At this moment the door opened, and the voice of the officious Andrew was heard. 'A'm bringin' in the caunles. Ye can light them gin ye like. Can do is easy carried about wi' ane.'

I ran to the door, which, as I hoped, I reached in time to prevent his observing who were in the apartment. I turned him out with hasty violence, shut the door after him, and locked it; then, instantly remembering his two companions below, knowing his talkative humour, and recollecting Syddal's remark that one of them was supposed to be a spy, I followed him as fast as I could to the servants' hall, in which they were assembled. Andrew's tongue was loud as I opened the door, but my unexpected appearance silenced him.

'What is the matter with you, you fool?' said I; 'you stare and look wild, as if you had seen a ghost.'

'N—n—no—nothing,' said Andrew; 'but your worship was pleased to be hasty.'

'Because you disturbed me out of a sound sleep, you fool. Syddal tells me he cannot find beds for these good fellows to-night, and Mr. Wardlaw thinks there will be no occasion to detain them. Here is a crown-piece for them to drink my health, and thanks for their good-will. You will leave the Hall immediately, my good lads.'

The men thanked me for my bounty, took the silver, and withdrew, apparently unsuspecting and contented. I watched their departure until I was sure they could have no further intercourse that night with honest Andrew. And so instantly had I followed on his heels, that I thought he could not have time to speak two words with them before I interrupted him. But it is wonderful what mischief may be done by only two words. On this occasion they cost two lives.

Having made these arrangements, the best which occurred to me upon the pressure of the moment, to secure privacy for my guests, I returned to report my proceedings, and added, that I had desired Syddall to answer every summons, concluding that it was by his connivance they had been secreted in the Hall. Diana raised her eyes to thank me for the caution.

'You now understand my mystery,' she said; 'you know, doubtless, how near and dear that relative is who has so often found shelter here, and will be no longer surprised that Rashleigh, having such a secret at his command, should rule me with a rod of iron.'

Her father added, 'that it was their intention to trouble me with their presence as short a time as was possible.'

I entreated the fugitives to waive every consideration but what affected their safety, and to rely on my utmost exertions to promote it. This led to an explanation of the circumstances under which they stood.

'I always suspected Rashleigh Osbaldistone,' said Sir Frederick; 'but his conduct towards my unprotected child, which with difficulty I wrung from her, and his treachery in your father's affairs, made me hate and despise him. In our last interview I concealed not my sentiments, as I should in prudence have attempted to do; and in resentment of the scorn with which I treated him, he added treachery and apostasy to his catalogue of crimes. I at that time fondly hoped that his defection would be of little consequence. The Earl of Mar had a gallant army in Scotland, and Lord Derwentwater, with Forster, Kenmure, Winterton, and others, were assembling forces on the Border. As my connexions with these English nobility and gentry were extensive, it was judged proper that I should accompany a detachment of Highlanders, who, under Brigadier MacIntosh of Borlum, crossed the Firth of Forth, traversed the low country of Scotland, and united themselves on the Borders with the English insurgents. My daughter accompanied me through the perils and fatigues of a march so long and difficult.'

'And she will never leave her dear father!' exclaimed Miss Vernon, clinging fondly to his arm.

'I had hardly joined our English friends when I became sensible that our cause was lost. Our numbers diminished instead of increasing, nor were we joined by any except of our own persuasion. The Tories of the High Church remained in general undecided, and at length we were cooped up by a

superior force in the little town of Preston. We defended ourselves resolutely one day. On the next the hearts of our leaders failed, and they resolved to surrender at discretion. To yield myself up on such terms were to have laid my head on the block. About twenty or thirty gentlemen were of my mind. We mounted our horses, and placed my daughter, who insisted on sharing my fate, in the centre of our little party. My companions, struck with her courage and filial piety, declared that they would die rather than leave her behind. We rode in a body down a street called Fishergate, which leads to a marshy ground or meadow, extending to the river Ribble, through which one of our party promised to show us a good ford. This marsh had not been strongly invested by the enemy, so that we had only an affair with a patrol of Honeywood's dragoons, whom we dispersed and cut to pieces. We crossed the river, gained the highroad to Liverpool, and then dispersed to seek several places of concealment and safety. My fortune led me to Wales, where there are many gentlemen of my religious and political opinions. I could not, however, find a safe opportunity of escaping by sea, and found myself obliged again to draw towards the North. A well-tried friend has appointed to meet me in this neighbourhood and guide me to a seaport on the Solway, where a sloop is prepared to carry me from my native country for ever. As Osbaldistone Hall was for the present uninhabited, and under the charge of old Syddall, who had been our confidant on former occasions, we drew to it as to a place of known and secure refuge. I resumed a dress which had been used with good effect to scare the superstitious rustics or domestics who chanced at any time to see me; and we expected from time to time to hear by Syddall of the arrival of our friendly guide, when your sudden coming hither and occupying this apartment laid us under the necessity of submitting to your mercy.'

Thus ended Sir Frederick's story, whose tale sounded to me like one told in a vision; and I could hardly bring myself to believe that I saw his daughter's form once more before me in flesh and blood, though with diminished beauty and sunk spirits. The buoyant vivacity with which she had resisted every touch of adversity had now assumed the air of composed and submissive but dauntless resolution and constancy. Her father, though aware and jealous of the effect of her praises on my mind, could not forbear expatiating upon them.

'She has endured trials,' he said, 'which might have digni-

fied the history of a martyr ; she has faced danger and death in various shapes ; she has undergone toil and privation from which men of the strongest frame would have shrunk ; she has spent the day in darkness and the night in vigil, and has never breathed a murmur of weakness or complaint. In a word, Mr. Osbaldistone,' he concluded, 'she is a worthy offering to that God to whom' crossing himself, 'I shall dedicate her, as all that is left dear or precious to Frederick Vernon.'

There was a silence after these words, of which I well understood the mournful import. The father of Diana was still as anxious to destroy my hopes of being united to her now, as he had shown himself during our brief meeting in Scotland.

'We will now,' said he to his daughter, 'intrude no farther on Mr. Osbaldistone's time, since we have acquainted him with the circumstances of the miserable guests who claim his protection.'

I requested them to stay, and offered myself to leave the apartment. Sir Frederick observed, that my doing so could not but excite my attendant's suspicion ; and that the place of their retreat was in every respect commodious, and furnished by Syddall with all they could possibly want. 'We might perhaps have even contrived to remain there, concealed from your observation ; but it would have been unjust to decline the most absolute reliance on your honour.'

'You have done me but justice,' I replied. 'To you, Sir Frederick, I am but little known ; but Miss Vernon, I am sure, will bear me witness that —'

'I do not want my daughter's evidence,' he said, politely, but yet with an air calculated to prevent my addressing myself to Diana, 'since I am prepared to believe all that is worthy of Mr. Francis Osbaldistone. Permit us now to retire ; we must take repose when we can, since we are absolutely uncertain when we may be called upon to renew our perilous journey.'

He drew his daughter's arm within his, and, with a profound reverence, disappeared with her behind the tapestry.

CHAPTER XXXIX

But now the hand of fate is on the curtain,
And gives the scene to light.

Don Sebastian.

I FELT stunned and chilled as they retired. Imagination, dwelling on an absent object of affection, paints her not only in the fairest light, but in that in which we most desire to behold her. I had thought of Diana as she was when her parting tear dropped on my cheek, when her parting token, received from the wife of MacGregor, augured her wish to convey into exile and conventual seclusion the remembrance of my affection. I saw her; and her cold passive manner, expressive of little except composed melancholy, disappointed, and in some degree almost offended, me. In the egotism of my feelings, I accused her of indifference, of insensibility. I upbraided her father with pride, with cruelty, with fanaticism; forgetting that both were sacrificing their interest, and Diana her inclination, to the discharge of what they regarded as their duty.

Sir Frederick Vernon was a rigid Catholic, who thought the path of salvation too narrow to be trodden by an heretic; and Diana, to whom her father's safety had been for many years the principal and moving spring of thoughts, hopes, and actions, felt that she had discharged her duty in resigning to his will not alone her property in the world, but the dearest affections of her heart. But it was not surprising that I could not at such a moment fully appreciate these honourable motives; yet my spleen sought no ignoble means of discharging itself.

'I am contemned, then,' I said, when left to run over the tenor of Sir Frederick's communications — 'I am contemned, and thought unworthy even to exchange words with her. Be it so; they shall not at least prevent me from watching over her safety. Here will I remain as an outpost, and, while under my

roof at least, no danger shall threaten her if it be such as the arm of one determined man can avert.'

I summoned Syddall to the library. He came, but came attended by the eternal Andrew, who, dreaming of great things in consequence of my taking possession of the Hall and the annexed estates, was resolved to lose nothing for want of keeping himself in view; and, as often happens to men who entertain selfish objects, overshot his mark and rendered his attentions tedious and inconvenient.

His unrequired presence prevented me from speaking freely to Syddall, and I dared not send him away for fear of increasing such suspicions as he might entertain from his former abrupt dismissal from the library. 'I shall sleep here, sir,' I said, giving them directions to wheel nearer to the fire an old-fashioned day-bed, or settee. 'I have much to do, and shall go late to bed.'

Syddall, who seemed to understand my look, offered to procure me the accommodation of a mattress and some bedding. I accepted his offer, dismissed my attendant, lighted a pair of candles, and desired that I might not be disturbed till seven in the ensuing morning.

The domestics retired, leaving me to my painful and ill-arranged reflections, until nature, worn out, should require some repose.

I endeavoured forcibly to abstract my mind from the singular circumstances in which I found myself placed. Feelings which I had gallantly combated while the exciting object was remote were now exasperated by my immediate neighbourhood to her whom I was so soon to part with for ever. Her name was written in every book which I attempted to peruse; and her image forced itself on me in whatever train of thought I strove to engage myself. It was like the officious slave of Prior's *Solomon*, —

Abra was ready ere I named her name,
And when I call'd another, Abra came.

I alternately gave way to these thoughts and struggled against them, sometimes yielding to a mood of melting tenderness of sorrow, which was scarce natural to me, sometimes arming myself with the hurt pride of one who had experienced what he esteemed unmerited rejection. I paced the library until I had chafed myself into a temporary fever. I then threw myself on the couch and endeavoured to dispose myself

to sleep ; but it was in vain that I used every effort to compose myself ; that I lay without movement of finger or of muscle, as still as if I had been already a corpse ; that I endeavoured to divert or banish disquieting thoughts, by fixing my mind on some act of repetition or arithmetical process. My blood throbbed, to my feverish apprehension, in pulsations which resembled the deep and regular strokes of a distant fulling-mill, and tingled in my veins like streams of liquid fire.

At length I arose, opened the window, and stood by it for some time in the clear moonlight, receiving, in part at least, that refreshment and dissipation of ideas from the clear and calm scene, without which they had become beyond the command of my own volition. I resumed my place on the couch with a heart, Heaven knows, not lighter, but firmer, and more resolved for endurance. In a short time a slumber crept over my senses ; still, however, though my senses slumbered, my soul was awake to the painful feelings of my situation, and my dreams were of mental anguish and external objects of terror.

I remember a strange agony, under which I conceived myself and Diana in the power of MacGregor's wife, and about to be precipitated from a rock into the lake ; the signal was to be the discharge of a cannon, fired by Sir Frederick Vernon, who, in the dress of a cardinal, officiated at the ceremony. Nothing could be more lively than the impression which I received of this imaginary scene. I could paint, even at this moment, the mute and courageous submission expressed in Diana's features, the wild and distorted faces of the executioners, who crowded around us with 'mopping and mowing,' grimaces ever changing, and each more hideous than that which preceded. I saw the rigid and inflexible fanaticism painted in the face of the father, I saw him lift the fatal match, the deadly signal exploded, it was repeated again and again and again, in rival thunders, by the echoes of the surrounding cliffs, and I awoke from fancied horror to real apprehension.

The sounds in my dream were not ideal. They reverberated on my waking ears, but it was two or three minutes ere I could collect myself so as distinctly to understand that they proceeded from a violent knocking at the gate. I leaped from my couch in great apprehension, took my sword under my arm, and hastened to forbid the admission of any one. But my route was necessarily circuitous, because the library looked not upon the quadrangle, but into the gardens. When I had

reached a staircase the windows of which opened upon the entrance court, I heard the feeble and intimidated tones of Syddall expostulating with rough voices which demanded admittance, by the warrant of Justice Standish, and in the king's name, and threatened the old domestic with the heaviest penal consequences if he refused instant obedience. Ere they had ceased I heard, to my unspeakable provocation, the voice of Andrew bidding Syddall stand aside and let him open the door.

'If they come in King George's name we have naething to fear; we hae spent baith bluid a id gowd for him. We dinna need to darn ourselves like some folks, Mr. Syddall. We are neither Papists nor Jacobites, I trow.'

It was in vain I accelerated my pace downstairs; I heard bolt after bolt withdrawn by the officious scoundrel, while all the time he was boasting his own and his master's loyalty to King George; and I could easily calculate that the party must enter before I could arrive at the door to replace the bars. Devoting the back of Andrew Fairservice to the cudgel so soon as I should have time to pay him his deserts, I ran back to the library, barricaded the door as I best could, and hastened to that by which Diana and her father entered, and begged for instant admittance. Diana herself undid the door. She was ready dressed, and betrayed neither perturbation nor fear.

'Danger is so familiar to us,' she said, 'that we are always prepared to meet it. My father is already up; he is in Rashleigh's apartment. We will escape into the garden, and thence by the postern-gate — I have the key from Syddall in case of need — into the wood. I know its dingles better than any one now alive. Keep them a few minutes in play. And, dear, dear Frank, once more fare thee well!'

She vanished like a meteor to join her father, and the intruders were rapping violently, and attempting to force the library door, by the time I had returned into it.

'You robber dogs!' I exclaimed, wilfully mistaking the purpose of their disturbance, 'if you do not instantly quit the house I will fire my blunderbuss through the door.'

'Fire a fule's bauble!' said Andrew Fairservice; 'it's Mr. Clerk Jobson with a legal warrant —'

'To search for, take, and apprehend,' said the voice of that execrable pettifogger, 'the bodies of certain persons in my warrant named, charged of high treason under the Thirteenth of King William, Chapter Third.'

And the violence on the door was renewed. 'I am rising, gentlemen,' said I, desirous to gain as much time as possible; 'commit no violence; give me leave to look at your warrant, and, if it is formal and legal, I shall not oppose it.'

'God save great George our King!' ejaculated Andrew. 'I tauld ye that ye would find nae Jacobites here.'

Spinning out the time as much as possible, I was at length compelled to open the door, which they would otherwise have forced.

Mr. Jobson entered, with several assistants, among whom I discovered the younger Wingfield, to whom, doubtless, he was obliged for his information, and exhibited his warrant, directed not only against Frederick Vernon, an attainted traitor, but also against Diana Vernon, spinster, and Francis Osbaldistone, gentleman, accused of misprision of treason. It was a case in which resistance would have been madness; I therefore, after capitulating for a few minutes' delay, surrendered myself a prisoner.

I had next the mortification to see Jobson go straight to the chamber of Miss Vernon, and I learned that from thence, without hesitation or difficulty, he went to the room where Sir Frederick had slept. 'The hare has stolen away,' said the brute, 'but her form is warm; the greyhounds will have her by the haunches yet.'

A scream from the garden announced that he prophesied too truly. In the course of five minutes Rashleigh entered the library with Sir Frederick Vernon and his daughter as prisoners. 'The fox,' he said, 'knew his old earth, but he forgot it could be stopped by a careful huntsman. I had not forgot the garden gate, Sir Frederick, or, if that title suits you better, most noble Lord Beauchamp.'

'Rashleigh,' said Sir Frederick, 'thou art a detestable villain!'

'I better deserved the name, Sir Knight, or my lord, when, under the direction of an able tutor, I sought to introduce civil war into the bosom of a peaceful country. But I have done my best,' said he, looking upwards, 'to atone for my errors.'

I could hold no longer. I had designed to watch their proceedings in silence, but I felt that I must speak or die. 'If hell,' I said, 'has one complexion more hideous than another, it is where villainy is masked by hypocrisy.'

'Ah! my gentle cousin,' said Rashleigh, holding a candle towards me, and surveying me from head to foot, 'right welcome to Osbaldistone Hall! I can forgive your spleen. It is hard

to lose an estate and a mistress in one night ; for we shall take possession of this poor manor-house in the name of the lawful heir, Sir Rashleigh Osbaldistone.'

While Rashleigh braved it out in this manner I could see that he put a strong force upon his feelings, both of anger and shame. But his state of mind was more obvious when Diana Vernon addressed him. 'Rashleigh,' she said, 'I pity you; for, deep as the evil is which you have laboured to do me and the evil you have actually done, I cannot hate you so much as I scorn and pity you. What you have now done may be the work of an hour, but will furnish you with reflection for your life -- of what nature I leave to your own conscience, which will not slumber for ever.'

Rashleigh strode once or twice through the room, came up to the side-table, on which wine was still standing, and poured out a large glass with a trembling hand; but when he saw that we observed his tremor he suppressed it by a strong effort, and, looking at us with fixed and daring composure, carried the bumper to his head without spilling a drop.

'It is my father's old burgundy,' he said, looking to Jobson: 'I am glad there is some of it left. You will get proper persons to take care of the house and property in my name, and turn out the doating old butler and that foolish Scotch rascal. Meanwhile, we will convey these persons to a more proper place of custody. I have provided the old family coach for your convenience,' he said, 'though I am not ignorant that even the lady could brave the night air on foot or on horseback were the errand more to her mind.'

Andrew wrung his hands. 'I only said that my master was surely speaking to a ghaist in the library; and the villain Lencie to betray an auld friend, that sang aff the same Psalm-book wi' him every Sabbath for twenty years!'

He was turned out of the house, together with Syddall, without being allowed to conclude his lamentation. His expulsion, however, led to some singular consequences. Resolving, according to his own story, to go down for the night where Mother Simpson would give him a lodging for old acquaintance' sake, he had just got clear of the avenue, and into the old wood, as it was called, though it was now used as pasture-ground rather than woodland, when he suddenly lighted on a drove of Scotch cattle, which were lying there to repose themselves after the day's journey. At this Andrew was in no way surprised, it being the well-known custom of his countrymen,

who take care of those droves, to quarter themselves after night upon the best uninclosed grass-ground they can find, and depart before daybreak to escape paying for their night's lodgings. But he was both surprised and startled when a Highlander, springing up, accused him of disturbing the cattle, and refused him to pass forward till he had spoken to his master. The mountaineer conducted Andrew into a thicket, where he found three or four more of his countrymen. 'And,' said Andrew, 'I saw sune they were ower mony men for the drove; and, from the questions they put to me, I judged they had other taw on their rock.'

They questioned him closely about all that had passed at Osbaldistone Hall, and seemed surprised and concerned at the report he made to them.

'And troth,' said Andrew, 'I tauld them a' I kend; for dirks and pistols were what I could never refuse information to in a' my life.'

They talked in whispers among themselves, and at length collected their cattle together and drove them close up to the entrance of the avenue, which might be half a mile distant from the house. They proceeded to drag together some felled trees which lay in the vicinity, so as to make a temporary barricade across the road, about fifteen yards beyond the avenue.

It was now near daybreak, and there was a pale eastern gleam mingled with the fading moonlight, so that objects could be discovered with some distinctness. The lumbering sound of a coach, drawn by four horses, and escorted by six men on horseback, was heard coming up the avenue. The Highlanders listened attentively. The carriage contained Mr. Jobson and his unfortunate prisoners. The escort consisted of Rashleigh and several horsemen, peace-officers and their assistants. As soon as we had passed the gate at the head of the avenue it was shut behind the cavalcade by a Highlandman, stationed there for that purpose. At the same time the carriage was impeded in its farther progress by the cattle, amongst which we were involved, and by the barricade in front. Two of the escort dismounted to remove the felled trees, which they might think were left there by accident or carelessness. The others began with their whips to drive the cattle from the road.

'Who dare abuse our cattle?' said a rough voice. 'Shoot him, Angus.'

Rashleigh instantly called out, 'A rescue—a rescue!' and, firing a pistol, wounded the man who spoke.

'*Claymore!*' cried the leader of the Highlanders, and a sally instantly commenced. The officers of the law, surprised at so sudden an attack, and not usually possessing the most desperate bravery, made but an imperfect defence, considering the superiority of their numbers. Some attempted to ride back to the Hall, but on a pistol being fired from behind the gate, they conceived themselves surrounded, and at length galloped off in different directions. Rashleigh, meanwhile, had dismounted, and on foot had maintained a desperate and single-handed conflict with the leader of the band. The window of the carriage, on my side, permitted me to witness it. At length Rashleigh dropped.

'Will you ask forgiveness for the sake of God, King James, and auld friendship?' said a voice which I knew right well.

'No, never,' said Rashleigh, firmly.

'Then, traitor, die in your treason!' retorted MacGregor, and plunged his sword in his prostrate antagonist.

In the next moment he was at the carriage door, handed out Miss Vernon, assisted her father and me to alight, and, dragging out the attorney head foremost, threw him under the wheel.

'Mr. Osbaldistone,' he said, in a whisper, 'you have nothing to fear; I must look after those who have. Your friends will soon be in safety. Farewell, and forget not the MacGregor.'

He whistled; his band gathered round him, and, hurrying Diana and her father along with him, they were almost instantly lost in the glades of the forest. The coachman and postilion had abandoned their horses and fled at the first discharge of firearms; but the animals, stopped by the barricade, remained perfectly still; and well for Jobson that they did so, for the slightest motion would have dragged the wheel over his body. My first object was to relieve him, for such was the rascal's terror that he never could have risen by his own exertions. I next commanded him to observe that I had neither taken part in the rescue nor availed myself of it to make my escape, and enjoined him to go down to the Hall and call some of his party who had been left there to assist the wounded. But Jobson's fears had so mastered and controlled every faculty of his mind that he was totally incapable of moving. I now resolved to go myself, but in my way I stumbled over the body of a man, as I thought dead or dying. It was, however, Andrew Fairservice, as well and whole as ever he was in his life, who had only taken this recumbent posture to avoid the

slashes, stabs, and pistol-balls which, for a moment or two, were flying in various directions. I was so glad to find him that I did not inquire how he came thither, but instantly commanded his assistance.

Rashleigh was our first object. He groaned when I approached him, as much through spite as through pain, and shut his eyes, as if determined, like Iago, to speak no word more. We lifted him into the carriage, and performed the same good office to another wounded man of his party, who had been left on the field. I then with difficulty made Jobson understand that he must enter the coach also, and support Sir Rashleigh upon the seat. He obeyed, but with an air as if he but half comprehended my meaning. Andrew and I turned the horses' heads round, and, opening the gate of the avenue, led them slowly back to Osbaldistone Hall.

Some fugitives had already reached the Hall by circuitous routes, and alarmed its garrison by the news that Sir Rashleigh, Clerk Jobson, and all their escort, save they who escaped to tell the tale, had been cut to pieces at the head of the avenue by a whole regiment of wild Highlanders. When we reached the mansion, therefore, we heard such a buzz as arises when bees are alarmed and mustering in their hives. Mr. Jobson, however, who had now in some measure come to his senses, found voice enough to make himself known. He was the more anxious to be released from the carriage as one of his companions (the peace-officer) had, to his inexpressible terror, expired by his side with a hideous groan.

Sir Rashleigh Osbaldistone was still alive, but so dreadfully wounded that the bottom of the coach was filled with his blood, and long traces of it left from the entrance-door into the stone-hall, where he was placed in a chair, some attempting to stop the bleeding with cloths, while others called for a surgeon, and no one seemed willing to go to fetch one.

'Torment me not,' said the wounded man. 'I know no assistance can avail me. I am a dying man.' He raised himself in his chair, though the damps and chill of death were already on his brow, and spoke with a firmness which seemed beyond his strength. 'Cousin Francis,' he said, 'draw near to me.' I approached him as he requested. 'I wish you only to know that the pangs of death do not alter one iota of my feelings towards you. I hate you!' he said, the expression of rage throwing a hideous glare into the eyes which were soon to be closed for ever — 'I hate you with a hatred as intense now, while

I lie bleeding and dying before you, as if my foot trode on your neck.'

'I have given you no cause, sir,' I replied, 'and for your own sake I could wish your mind in a better temper.'

'You *have* given me cause,' he rejoined: 'in love, in ambition, in the paths of interest, you have crossed and blighted me at every turn. I was born to be the honour of my father's house; I have been its disgrace, and all owing to you. My very patrimony has become yours. Take it,' he said, 'and may the curse of a dying man cleave to it!'

In a moment after he had uttered this frightful wish he fell back in the chair; his eyes became glazed, his limbs stiffened, but the grin and glare of mortal hatred survived even the last gasp of life. I will dwell no longer on so painful a picture, nor say any more of the death of Rashleigh than that it gave me access to my rights of inheritance without farther challenge, and that Jobson found himself compelled to allow that the ridiculous charge of misprision of high treason was got up on an affidavit which he made with the sole purpose of favouring Rashleigh's views, and removing me from Osbaldistone Hall. The rascal's name was struck off the list of attorneys, and he was reduced to poverty and contempt.

I returned to London when I had put my affairs in order at Osbaldistone Hall, and felt happy to escape from a place which suggested so many painful recollections. My anxiety was now acute to learn the fate of Diana and her father. A French gentleman who came to London on commercial business was entrusted with a letter to me from Miss Vernon, which put my mind at rest respecting their safety.

It gave me to understand that the opportune appearance of MacGregor and his party was not fortuitous. The Scottish nobles and gentry engaged in the insurrection, as well as those of England, were particularly anxious to further the escape of Sir Frederick Vernon, who, as an old and trusted agent of the house of Stewart, was possessed of matter enough to have ruined half Scotland. Rob Roy, of whose sagacity and courage they had known so many proofs, was the person whom they pitched upon to assist his escape, and the place of meeting was fixed at Osbaldistone Hall. You have already heard how nearly the plan had been disconcerted by the unhappy Rashleigh. It succeeded, however, perfectly; for, when once Sir Frederick and his daughter were again at large, they found horses prepared for them, and, by MacGregor's knowledge of

the country — for every part of Scotland and of the north of England was familiar to him — were conducted to the western sea-coast, and safely embarked for France. The same gentleman told me that Sir Frederick was not expected to survive for many months a lingering disease, the consequence of late hardships and privations. His daughter was placed in a convent, and, although it was her father's wish she should take the veil, he was understood to refer the matter entirely to her own inclinations.

When these news reached me I frankly told the state of my affections to my father, who was not a little startled at the idea of my marrying a Roman Catholic. But he was very desirous to see me 'settled in life,' as he called it; and he was sensible that, in joining him with heart and hand in his commercial labours, I had sacrificed my own inclinations. After a brief hesitation, and several questions asked and answered to his satisfaction, he broke out with — 'I little thought a son of mine should have been lord of Osbaldistone Manor, and far less that he should go to a French convent for a spouse. But so dutiful a daughter cannot but prove a good wife. You have worked at the desk to please me, Frank; it is but fair you should wive to please yourself.'

How I sped in my wooing, Will Tresham, I need not tell you. You know, too, how long and happily I lived with Diana. You know how I lamented her. But you do not — cannot know, how much she deserved her husband's sorrow.

I have no more of romantic adventure to tell, nor, indeed, anything to communicate farther, since the latter incidents of my life are so well known to one who has shared, with the most friendly sympathy, the joys as well as the sorrows by which its scenes have been chequered. I often visited Scotland, but never again saw the bold Highlander who had such an influence on the early events of my life. I learned, however, from time to time that he continued to maintain his ground among the mountains of Loch Lomond, in despite of his powerful enemies, and that he even obtained, to a certain degree, the connivance of government to his self-elected office of Protector of the Lennox, in virtue of which he levied black-mail with as much regularity as the proprietors did their ordinary rents. It seemed impossible that his life should have concluded without a violent end. Nevertheless, he died in old age and by a peaceful death, some time about the year 1733, and is still remembered in his country as the Robin Hood of

Scotland, the dread of the wealthy, but the friend of the poor, and possessed of many qualities, both of head and heart, which would have graced a less equivocal profession than that to which his fate condemned him.

Old Andrew Fairservice used to say that 'There were many things ower bad for blessing, and ower gude for banning, like Rob Roy.'

[Here the original manuscript ends somewhat abruptly. I have reason to think that what followed related to private affairs.]

APPENDICES TO INTRODUCTION

No. I

ADVERTISEMENT FOR APPREHENSION OF ROB ROY

(From the *Edinburgh Evening Courant*, June 18 to June 20, A.D. 1712. No. 1058.)

'THAT Robert Campbell, commonly known by the name of Rob Roy Mac-Gregor, being lately intrusted by several noblemen and gentlemen with considerable sums for buying cows for them in the Highlands, has treacherously gone off with the money, to the value of £1000 sterling, which he carries along with him. All Magistrates and Officers of his Majesty's forces are intreated to seize upon the said Rob Roy, and the money which he carries with him, until the persons concerned in the money be heard against him: and that notice be given, when he is apprehended, to the keeper of the Exchange Coffee-house at Edinburgh, and the keeper of the Coffee-house at Glasgow, where the parties concerned will be advertised, and the seizers shall be very reasonably rewarded for their pains.'

It is unfortunate that this hue and cry, which is afterwards repeated in the same paper, contains no description of Rob Roy's person, which, of course, we must suppose to have been pretty generally known. As it is directed against Rob Roy personally, it would seem to exclude the idea of the cash being carried off by his partner, MacDonald, who would certainly have been mentioned in the advertisement if the creditors concerned had supposed him to be in possession of the money.

No. II

LETTERS FROM AND TO THE DUKE OF MONTROSE RESPECTING ROB ROY'S ARREST OF MR. GRAHAM OF KILLEARN

THE DUKE OF MONTROSE TO _____¹

'GLASGOW, the 21st November 1716.

'MY LORD—I was surprised last night with the account of a very remarkable instance of the insolence of that very notorious rogue Rob Roy, whom your Lordship has often heard named. The honour of his Majesty's gov-

¹ It does not appear to whom this letter was addressed. Certainly, from its style and tenor, it was designed for some person high in rank and office, perhaps the King's Advocate for the time. (But see Postscript, p. 403.)

ernment being concerned in it, I thought it my duty to acquaint your Lordship of the particulars by an express.

Mr. Grahame of Killearn (whom I have had occasion to mention frequently to you, for the good service he did last winter during the rebellion), having the charge of my Highland estate, went to Monteth, which is a part of it, on Monday last, to bring in my rents, it being usual for him to be there for two or three nights together at this time of the year, in a countrie house, for the conveniency of meeting the tenants upon that account. The same night, about 9 of the clock, Rob Roy, with a party of those ruffians whom he has still keep't about him since the late rebellion, surrounded the house where Mr. Grahame was with some of my tenants doing his business, ordered his men to present their gunns in att the window of the room where he was sitting, while he himself at the same time with others entered att the door, with cocked pistols, and made Mr. Grahame prisoner, carreling him away to the hills with the money he had got, his books and papers, and my tenants' bonds for their fines, amounting to above a thousand pounds sterling, whereof the one-half had been paid last year, and the other was to have been paid now; and att the same time had the insolence to cause him write a letter to me (the copy of which is enclosed) offering me terms of a treaty.

That your Lordship may have the better view of this matter, it will be necessary that I should inform you that this fellow has now, of a long time, put himself at the head of the Clan M'Gregor, a race of people who, in all ages, have distinguished themselves beyond others by robberies, depredations, and murders, and have been the constant harbourers and entertainers of vagabonds and loose people. From the time of the Revolution he has taken every opportunity to appear against the government, acting rather as a robber than doing any real service to those whom he pretended to appear for, and has reallie done more mischief to the countrie than all the other Highlanders have done.

Some three or four years before the last rebellion broke out, being overburdened with debts, he quitted his ordinary residence and removed some twelve or sixteen miles farther into the Highlands, putting himself under the protection of the Earl of Broadalbin. When my Lord Cadogan was in the Highlands he ordered his house att this place to be burnt, which your Lordship sees he now places to my account.

This obliges him to return to the same countrie he went from, being a most rugged inaccessible place, where he took up his residence anew amongst his own friends and relations; but, well judging that it was possible to surprise him, he, with about forty-five of his followers, went to Inverary, and made a sham surrender of their arms to Coll. Campbell of Finab, Commander of one of the Independant Companies, and returned home with his men, each of them having the Coll.'s protection. This happened in the beginning of summer last; yet not long after he appeared with his men twice in arms, in opposition to the King's troops; and one of those times attackt them, rescued a prisoner from them, and all this while sent abroad his party through the country, plundering the countrie people, and amongst the rest some of my tenants.

Being informed of these disorders after I came to Scotland, I applied to Lieut. Genl. Carpenter, who ordered three partys from Glasgow, Stirling, and Flnlarig, to march in the night by different routes, in order to surprise him and his men in their houses, which would have had its effect certainly if the great rains that happened to fall that verie night had not retarded the march of the troops, so as some of the parties came too late to the stations that they were ordered for. All that could be done upon this occasion was to burn a countrie house where Rob Roy then resided, after some of his clan had, from the rocks, fired upon the King's troops, by which a grenadier was killed.

Mr. Grahame of Killearn, being my deputy-sheriff in that county, went along with the party that marched from Stirling; and, doubtless, will now

meet with the worse treatment from that barbarous people on that account. Besides, that he is my relation, and that they know how active he has been in the service of the Government — all which, your Lordship may believe, puts me under very great concern for the gentleman, while, at the same time, I can foresee no manner of way how to relieve him other than to leave him to chance and his own management.

'I had my thoughts before of proposing to Government the building of some barracks, as the only expedient for suppressing these rebels, and securing the peace of the country; and in that view speak to Genl. Carpenter, who has now a scheme of it in his hands; and I am persuaded that will be the true method for restraining them effectually; but, in the meantime, it will be necessary to lodge some of the troops in those places, upon which I intend to write to the General.

'I am sensible I have troubled your Lordship with a verie long letter, which I should be ashamed of, were I myself singly concerned; but where the honour of the King's Government is touched, I need make no apology, and I shall only beg leave to add, that I am, with great respect and truth,

'My Lord,

'yr. Lord's. most humble and

'obedient servant,

'MONTROSE.'

COPY OF GRAHAM OF KILLEARN'S LETTER INCLOSED IN THE PRECEDING

'CHAPPELLARBOCH, Nov. 19th, 1716.

'MAY IT PLEASE YOUR GRACE — I am obliged to give your Grace the trouble of this, by Robert Roy's commands, being so unfortunate at present as to be his prisoner. I refer the way and manner I was apprehended to the bearer, and shall only, in short, acquaint your Grace with the demands, which are, that your Grace shall discharge him of all sounes he owes your Grace, and give him the sounes of 3400 merks for his loss and damages sustained by him, both at Craigmstown and at his house, Auchinchisallen; and that your Grace shall give your word not to trouble or prosecute him afterwards; till which time he carries me, all the money I received this day, my books and bonds for entress, not yet paid, along with him, with assurances of hard usage if any partys are sent after him. The sum I received this day, conform to the nearest computation I can make before sever^{al}. of the gentlemen, is £3227 2s. 8d. Scots, of which I gave them notes, I shall wait your Grace's return, and ever am,

'Your Grace's most obedient, faithful,

'humble servant,

Sic sub.

JOHN GRAHAME.

THE DUKE OF MONTROSE TO —————

28th Nov. 1716. — KILLEARN'S RELEASE

'GLASGOW, 28th Nov. 1716.

'SIR — Having acquainted you by my last, of the 21st instant, of what had happened to my friend, Mr. Graham of Killearn, I'm very glad to have it now to tell you, that last night I was very agreeably surprised with Mr. Graham's coming here himself, and giving me the first account I had had of him from the time of his being carried away. It seems Rob Roy, when he came to consider a little better of it, found that he could not mend his matters by retaining Killearn his prisoner, which could only expose him still the more to the justice of the Government; and therefore thought fit

to dismiss him on Sunday evening last, having kept him from the Monday night before, under a very uneasy kind of restraint, being obliged to change continually from place to place. He gave him back the books, papers, and bonds, but kept the money.

'I am, with great truth, Sir,
'your most humble servant,

'MONTROSE.'

No. III

CHALLENGE BY ROB ROY

(See Introduction, p. xxii)

ROB ROY TO AIN HIE AND MIGHTY PRINCE, JAMES DUKE
OF MONTROSE

'In charity to your Grace's courage and conduct, please know, the only way to retrieve both is to treat Rob Roy like himself, in appointing your place and choice of arms, that at once you may extirpate your inveterate enemy, or put a period to your punny (puny?) life in falling gloriously by his hands. That impertinent critics or flatterers may not brand me for challenging a man that's repute of a poor dastardly soul, let such know that I admit of the two great supporters of his character and the captain of his bands to joyne with him in the combate. Then sure your Grace woult have the impudence to clamour att court for multitudes to hunt me like a fox, under pretence that I am not to be found above ground. This saves your Grace and the troops any further trouble of searching; that is, if your ambition of glory press you to embrace this unequal venture offerd of Rob's head. But if your Grace's piety, prudence, and cowardice forbids hazarding this gentlemanly expedient, then let your Desyre of Peace restur what you have robed from me by the turranny of your present situation, otherwise your overthrowe or ruin is determined; and advertise your friends never more to look for the frequent civility payed them, of sending them home without their arms only, even their former cravings woult purchase that favour; so your Grace by this has peace in your offer, if the sound of war be frightful, and chuse you which, your good friend or mortal enemy.'

This singular rhodomontade is inclosed in a letter to a friend of Rob Roy, probably a retainer of the Duke of Argyle in Isla, which is in these words:—

'SIR—Receive the inclosed paper, q^a you are taking your Botle: it will divert yourself and comrades. I got no news since I saw you, only q^t we had before about the Spaiyards is like to continue. If I get any account about them I'll be sure to let you here of it, and till then I will not write any more till I have more accounts. I am, Sir, your affect, ('[cousin] and most humble servant,

'ARGYLE, 1719.'

Ro: Roy.

Addressed, To Mr. Patrick Anderson,
At Ilay—These.

The seal, a stag—no bad emblem
of a wild catheran.

It appears from the envelope that Rob Roy still continued to act as intelligence to the Duke of Argyle and his agents. The news he alludes to is probably some vague report of invasion from Spain. Such rumours were likely enough to be affout, in consequence of the disembarkation of the troops who were taken at Glenshiel in the preceding year, 1718.

No. IV

FROM ROBERT CAMPBELL, *alias* M'GREGOR,
COMMONLY CALLED ROB ROY, TO
FIELD-MARSHAL WADE,Then receiving the submission of disaffected Chieftains and Clans.¹

SIR — The great humanity with which you have constantly acted in the discharge of the trust reposed in you, and your having ever made use of the great powers with which you were vested, as the means of doing good and charitable offices to such as ye found proper objects of compassion, will, I hope, excuse my importunity in endeavouring to approve myself not absolutely unworthy of that mercy and favour your Excellency has so generously procured from his Majesty for others in my unfortunate circumstances. I am very sensible nothing can be alledged sufficient to excuse so great a crime as I have been guilty of, that of Rebellion. But I humbly beg leave to lay before your Excellency some particulars in the circumstances of my guilt, which, I hope, will extenuate it in some measure. It was my misfortune, at the time the Rebellion broke out, to be liable to legal diligence and caption, at the Duke of Montrose's instance, for debt alledged due to him. To avoid being flung into prison, as I must certainly have been, had I followed my real inclinations in joining the King's troops at Stirling, I was forced to take party with the adherents of the Pretender; for the country being all in arms, it was neither safe nor indeed possible for me to stand neuter. I should not, however, plead my being forced into that unnatural Rebellion against his Majesty, King George, if I could not at the same time assure your Excellency, that I not only avoided acting offensively against his Majesty's forces upon all occasions, but, on the contrary, sent his Grace the Duke of Argyll all the intelligence I could from time to time, of the strength and situation of the Rebels; which I hope his Grace will do me the justice to acknowledge. As to the debt to the Duke of Montrose, I have discharged it to the utmost farthing. I beg your Excellency would be persuaded that, had it been in my power, as it was in my inclination, I should always have acted for the service of his Majesty King George, and that one reason of my begging the favour of your intercession with his Majesty, for the pardon of my life, is the earnest desire I have to employ it in his service, whose goodness, justice, and humanity are so conspicuous to all mankind.

I am, with all duty and respect,

Your Excellency's most, etc.

ROBERT CAMPBELL.

No. V

THERE are many productions of the Scottish ballad poets upon the lion-like mode of wooing practised by the ancient Highlanders when they had a fancy for the person (or property) of a Lowland damsel. One example is found in Mr. Robert Jamieson's *Popular Scottish Songs*: —

Bonny Baby Livingstone
Gaed out to see the hay,
And she has met with Glenlyon,
Who has stolen her away.

He took frae her her sattin coat,
But an her silken gown,
Syne rowd her in his tartan plaid
And happd her round and roun^d.

¹ This curious epistle is copied from *An Authentic Narrative of Marshal Wade's Proceedings in the Highlands*, communicated by the late eminent antiquary, George Chalmers, Esq., to Mr. Robert Jamieson of the Register House, Edinburgh, and published in the Appendix to an Edition of Burt's *Letters from the North of Scotland* 2 vols. 8vo. Edinburgh, 1818.

In another ballad we are told how —

Four-and-twenty Hieland men
Came down by Fiddoch side,
And they have sworn a deadly oath,
Jean Muir suld be a bride :

And they have sworn a deadly oath,
Ilk man upon his durk,
That she should wed with Duncan Ger,
Or they'd make bloody worke.

This last we have from tradition, but there are many others in the collections of Scottish ballads to the same purpose.

The achievement of Robert Olz, or Young Rob Roy, as the Lowlanders called him, was celebrated in a ballad, of which there are twenty different and various editions. The tune is lively and wild, and we select the following words from memory : —

Rob Roy is frae the Hielands come,
Down to the Lawland border;
And he has stolen that lady away,
To haud his house in order.

'Rob Roy, he was my father called,
MacGregor was his name, Lady;
A' the country, far and near,
Have heard MacGregor's fame, Lady.

He set her on a milk-white steed,
Of none he stood in awe;
Untill they reached the Hieland hills,
Aboon the Balaaha' !¹

'He was a hedge about his friends,
A heckle to his foes, Lady;
If any man did him gainsay,
He felt his deadly blows, Lady.

Saying, 'Be content, be content,
Be content with me, Lady;
Where will ye find in Lennox land,
See braw a man as me, Lady.'

'I am as bold, I am as bold,
I am as bold and more, Lady;
Ony man that doubts my word,
May try my gude claymore, Lady.

'Then be content, be content,
Be content with me, Lady;
For now you are my wedded wife,
Untill the day ye die, Lady.'

No. VI

GHLUNE DHU

THE following notices concerning this Chief fell under the Author's eye while the sheets were in the act of going through the press. They occur in manuscript memoirs, written by a person intimately acquainted with the incidents of 1745.

This Chief had the important task entrusted to him of defending the Castle of Doune, in which the Chevalier placed a garrison to protect his communication with the Highlands, and to repel any sallies which might be made from Stirling Castle. Ghlune Dhu distinguished himself by his good conduct in this charge.

Ghlune Dhu is thus described : 'Glengyle is, in person, a tall handsome man, and has more of the mien of the ancient heroes than our modern fine gentlemen are possessed of. He is honest and disinterested to a proverb, extremely modest, brave and intrepid, and born one of the best partizans in Europe. In short, the whole people of that country declared that never did men live under so mild a government as Glengyle's, not a man having so much as lost a chicken while he continued there.'

It would appear from this curious passage that Glengyle—not Stewart of Ballechin, as averred in a note (28) on *Waverley*—commanded the garrison of Doune. Ballechin might, no doubt, succeed Macgregor in the situation.

¹ A pass on the eastern margin of Loch Lomond, and an entrance to the Highlands.

No. VII

ESCAPE OF ROB ROY FROM THE DUKE OF
ATHOLE.

THE following copy of a letter which passed from one clergyman of the Church of Scotland to another was communicated to me by John Gregorson, Esq., of Ardtornish. The escape of Rob Roy is mentioned, like other interesting news of the time with which it is intermingled. The disagreement between the Dukes of Athole and Argyle seems to have animated the former against Rob Roy, as one of Argyle's partizans.

'REV. AND DEAR BROTHER,

'Y^e of the 28th Jun I had by the bearer. I^m pleased yo have got back again y^e Delinquent, which may probably save you of the trouble of her child. I'm sorry I've yet very little of certain news to give you from Court, tho' I've seen all the last weekes prints, only I find in them a passage which is all the account I can give you of the Indemnity. y^e when the estates of forfeited Rebels Comes to be sold all Just debts Documented are to be preferred to Officers of the Court of enquiry. The Bill in favours of that Court against the Lords of Session in Scotland is past the house of Commons and Come before the Lords, which is thought to be considerably more ample y^e formerly w^t respect to the Disposing of estates Canvassing and paying of Debts. It's said y^e the examination of Cadugans accounts is dropped, but it wants Confirmation here as yet. Oxford's trials should be entered upon Maturday last. We hear that the Duchess of Argyle is w^t child. I doe not hear y^e the Divisions at Court are any thing abated or of any appearance of the Dukes having any thing of his Maj: favour. I heartily wish the present humours at Court may not prove an encouragm^t to watchfull and restless enemies.

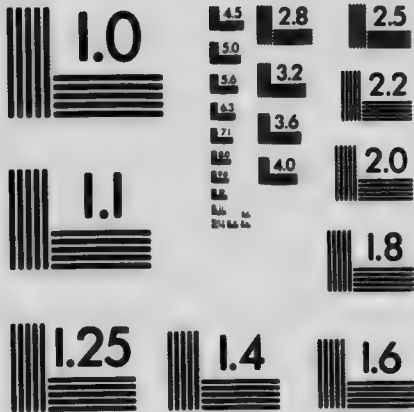
'My accounts of Rob Roy his escape are y^e, after severall Embassies between his Grace (who I hear did Correspond w^t some at Court about it) and Rob, he at length upon promise of protections Came to walte upon the Duke, & being presently secured his Grace sent post to Ed^r to acquaint the Court of his being apprehended, & call his friends at Ed^r and to desire a party from Ge^s Carpinter to receive and bring him to Ed^r, which party came the length of Kenross in Fife; he was to be delivered to them by a party his Grace had demanded from the Governour at Perth, who when upon their march towards Dunkell to receive him were mete w^t and returned by his Grace, having resolved to deliver him by a party of his own men, and left Rob at Logierate under a strong guard till y^e party should be ready to receive him. This space of time Rob had Employed in taking the other dram heartily w^t the Guard, & q^a all were pretty hearty Rob is delivering a letter for his wife to a servant, to whom he most needs deliver some private instructions at the Door (for his wife) where he's attended w^t on the Guard. When serious in this privat Conversation he is making some few steps carelessly from the Door about the house till he comes closs by this horse, which he soon mounted and made off. This is no small mortification to the guard, because of the delay it give to there hopes of a Considerable additional charge ag^t John Roy.¹ My wife was upon Thursday last delivered of a Son after sore travell, of which she still continues very weak. I give y^e Lady hearty thanks for the Highland plaid. It's good cloath, but it does not answer the sett I sent some time agae w^t

¹ i. e. John the Red - John Duke of Argyle, so called from his complexion, more commonly styled 'Red John the Warriour.'



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McArthur, & tho it had I told in my last y^t my wife was obliged to provid herself to finish her bed before she was lighted, but I know y^t let^r came not timely to y^r hand. . . . I'm sorry I had not mony to send by the bearer, having no thought of it & being exposed to some little expenses last week, but I expect some sure occasion when order by a letter to receive it. Excuse this freedom from &c.

'MANSE OF COMRIE, July 2d, 1717.

'I salute y^r lady. I wish my . . . her Daughter much Joy.'

[This note was printed for the first time in the Abbotsford Edition, 1842-46.]

POSTSCRIPT

THE second of the Appendices to the Introduction to *Rob Roy* (see p. 397) contains two curious letters respecting the arrest of Mr. Graham of Killearn by that daring freebooter, while levying the Duke of Montrose's rents. These were taken from scroll copies in the possession of his Grace the present Duke, who kindly permitted the use of them in the present publication. The Novel had but just passed through the press when the Right Honourable Mr. Peel — whose important state avocations do not avert his attention from the interests of literature — transmitted to the Author copies of the original letters and inclosure, of which he possessed only the rough draught. The originals were discovered in the State Paper Office by the indefatigable researches of Mr. Lemon, who is daily throwing more light on that valuable collection of records. From the documents with which the Author has been thus kindly favoured, he is enabled to fill up the addresses which were wanting in the scrolls. That of the 21st Nov. 1716 is addressed to Lord Viscount Townshend, and is accompanied by one of the same date to Robert Pringle, Esquire, the Under-Secretary of State, which is here inserted, as relative to so curious an incident.

Letter from the DUKE OF MONTROSE to ROBERT PRINGLE, Esq. Under-Secretary to Lord Viscount Townshend

'GLASGOW, 21 Nov. 1716.

'S^r,

'Haveling had so many dispatches to make this night, I hope ye 'l excuse me that I make use of another hand to give yow a short account of the occasion of this express, by which I have written to my Ld. Duke of Roxburgh and my Lord Townshend, which I hope ye 'l gett carefully delivered.

'Mr. Graham, younger of Killearn, being on Munday last in Monteith at a country house, collecting my rents, was about nine o'clock that same night surprised by Rob Roy with a party of his men in arms, who, haveling surrounded the house and secured the avenues, presented their guns in at the windows, while he himself entered the room with some others with cock pistols, and seized Killearn, with all his money, books, papers, and bonds, and carryed all away with him to the hills, at the same time ordering Killearn to write a letter to me (of which ye have the copy inclosed), proposing a very honourable treaty to me. I must say this story was as surprising to me as it was insolent; and it must bring a very great concern upon

me, that this gentleman, my near relation, should be brought to suffer all the barbarity and cruelty which revenge and malice may suggest to these miscreants, for his having acted a faithful part in the service of the government, and his affection to me in my concerns.

'I need not be more particular to you, since I know that my Letter to my Lord Townshend will come into your hands, so shall only now give you the assurances of my being, with great sincerity,

'8^r, y^r most humble servant,
(Signed) MONTROSE.

'I long exceedingly for a return of my former dispatches to the Secretary about Methven and Col^d Urquhart, and my wife's cousins, Balnamoon and Phinaven.

'I must beg yow 'll give my humble service to Mr. Secretary Methven, and tell him that I must refer him to what I have written to my Lord Townshend in this affair of Rob Roy, believing it was needless to trouble both with letters.'

Examined, ROBT. LEMON,
Deputy Keeper of State Papers.

STATE PAPER OFFICE,
Nov. 4, 1829.

NOTE.—The inclosure referred to in the preceding letter is another copy of the letter which Mr. Graham of Killearn was compelled by Rob Roy to write to the Duke of Montrose, and is exactly the same as the one inclosed in his Grace's letter to Lord Townshend, dated November 21st, 1716.

R. L.

The last letter in the same Appendix, p. 399 (28th November), acquainting the Government with Killearn's being set at liberty, is also addressed to the Under-Secretary of State, Mr. Pringle.

The Author may also here remark that, immediately previous to the insurrection of 1715, he perceives from some notes of information given to Government that Rob Roy appears to have been much employed and trusted by the Jacobite party, even in the very delicate task of transporting *specie* to the Earl of Breadalbane, though it might have somewhat resembled trusting Don Raphael and Ambrose de Lamela with the church-treasure.¹

¹ See MacGregor Papers. Note 16.



NOTES TO ROB ROY

NOTE 1. — HORSES OF THE CATHOLICS, p. 64

ON occasions of public alarm, in the beginning of the eighteenth century, the horses of the Catholics were often seized upon, as they were always supposed to be on the eve of rising in rebellion.

NOTE 2. — TOBACCO, p. 84

The lines here quoted belong to, or were altered from, a set of verses at one time very popular in England, beginning, 'Tobacco that is withered quite.' In Scotland the celebrated Ralph Erskine, author of the *Gospel Sonnets*, published what he called '*Smoking Spiritualized*, in two parts. The first part being an Old Meditation upon Smoking Tobacco.' It begins —

This Indian weed now withered quite,
Tho' green at noon, cut down at night,
Shows thy decay;
All flesh is hay.
Thus think, and smoke tobacco. (*Laing*)

NOTE 3. — NUNNERY OF WILTON, p. 89

The nunnery of Wilton was granted to the Earl of Pembroke upon its dissolution by the magisterial authority of Henry VIII. or his son Edward VI. On the accession of Queen Mary, of Catholic memory, the Earl found it necessary to reinstall the Abbess and her fair recluses, which he did with many expressions of his remorse, kneeling humbly to the vestals, and inducting them into the convent and possessions from which he had expelled them. With the accession of Elizabeth the accommodating Earl again resumed his Protestant faith, and a second time drove the nuns from their sanctuary. The remonstrances of the Abbess, who reminded him of his penitent expressions on the former occasion, could wring from him no other answer than that in the text — 'Go spin, you jade — go spin.'

NOTE 4. — BARONY LAIGH KIRK, p. 179

THE Laigh Kirk or Crypt of the Cathedral of Glasgow served for more than two centuries as the church of the Barony Parish, and for a time was converted into a burial-place. In the restorations of this grand building the crypt was cleared out, and is now admired as one of the richest specimens of Early English architecture existing in Scotland (*Laing*).

NOTE 5. — AN AGED CLERGYMAN, p. 183

I have in vain laboured to discover this gentleman's name and the period of his incumbency. I do not, however, despair to see these points, with some others which may elude my sagacity, satisfactorily elucidated by one or other of the periodical publications which have devoted their pages to explanatory commentaries on my former volumes: whose research and ingenuity claim my peculiar gratitude, for having discovered many persons and circumstances connected with my narratives of which I myself never so much as dreamed.

NOTE 6. — INCH CAILLEACH, p. 216

Inch Cailleach is an island in Loch Lomond, where the clan of MacGregor were wont to be interred, and where their sepulchres may still be seen. It formerly contained a nunnery; hence the name Inch Cailleach, or the Island of Old Women.

NOTE 7. — BOYS' SNOW-BALLING, p. 238

The boys in Scotland used formerly to make a sort of saturnalia in a snow-storm by pelting passengers with snow-balls. But those exposed to that annoyance were excused from it on the easy penalty of a back (courtesy) from a female or a bow from a man. It was only the refractory who underwent the storm.

NOTE 8. — TO FIGHT LIKE HENRY WYND, p. 248

Two great clans fought out a quarrel with thirty men of a side, in presence of the king, on the North Inch of Perth, on or about the year 1392; a man was amissing on one side, whose room was filled by a little bandy-legged artizan of Perth. This substitute, Henry Wynd — or, as the Highlanders called him, Gow Chrom, that is, the bandy-legged smith — fought well, and contributed greatly to the fate of the battle, without knowing which side he fought on; so, 'to fight for your own hand, like Henry Wynd,' passed into a proverb. — [See *The Fair Maid of Perth*.]

NOTE 9. — MONS MEG, p. 255

Mons Meg was a large old-fashioned piece of ordnance, a great favourite with the Scottish common people: she was fabricated at Mons, in Flanders, in the reign of James IV. or V. of Scotland. This gun figures frequently in the public accounts of the time, where we find charges for grease to grease Meg's mouth withal (to increase, as every school-boy knows, the loudness of the report), ribands to deck her carriage, and pipers to play before her when she was brought from the Castle to accompany the Scottish army on any distant expedition. After the Union there was much popular apprehension that the regalia of Scotland, and the subordinate palladium, Mons Meg, would be carried to England to complete the odious surrender of national independence. The regalia, sequestered from the sight of the public, were generally supposed to have been abstracted in this manner. As for Mons Meg, she remained in the Castle of Edinburgh till, by order of the Board of Ordnance, she was actually removed to Woolwich about 1757. The regalia, by his Majesty's special command, have been brought forth from their place of concealment in 1818, and exposed to the view of the people, by whom they must be looked upon with deep associations; and in this very winter of 1828-29 Mons Meg has been restored to the country, where that which in every other place or situation was a mere mass of rusty iron becomes once more a curious monument of antiquity.

NOTE 10. — FAIRY SUPERSTITION, p. 261

The lakes and precipices amidst which the Avonhru or river Forth has its birth are still, according to popular tradition, haunted by the elfin people, the most peculiar but most pleasing of the creations of Celtic superstitions. The opinions entertained about these beings are much the same with those of the Irish, so exquisitely well narrated by Mr. Crofton Croker. An eminently beautiful little conical hill, near the eastern extremity of the valley of Aberfoyl, is supposed to be one of their peculiar haunts, and is the scene which awakens in Andrew Fairservice (Mr. Jarvie) the terror of their power. It is remarkable that two successive clergymen of the parish of Aberfoyl have employed themselves in writing about this fairy superstition. The eldest of these was Robert Kirk, a man of some talents, who translated the Psalms into Gaelic verse. He had formerly been minister at the neighbouring parish of Balquidder, and died at Aberfoyl in 1688 at the early age of forty-two.

He was author of the *Secret Commonwealth*, which was printed after his death in 1691, an edition which I have never seen, and was reprinted in Edinburgh, 1815. This is a work concerning the fairy people, in whose existence Mr. Kirk appears to have been a devout believer. He describes them with the usual powers and qualities ascribed to such beings in Highland tradition.

But what is sufficiently singular, the Rev. Robert Kirk, author of the said treatise, is believed himself to have been taken away by the fairies, in revenge, perhaps, for having let in too much light upon the secrets of their commonwealth. We learn this catastrophe from the information of his successor, the late¹ amiable and learned Dr. Patrick Graham, also minister at Aberfoyl, who, in his *Sketches of Perthshire*, has not forgotten to touch upon the *Daoine Shie*, or men of peace.

The Rev. Robert Kirk was, it seems, walking upon a little eminence to the west of the present manse, which is still held a *Dun Shie*, or fairy mound, when he sunk down in what seemed to mortals a fit, and was supposed to be dead. This, however, was not his real fate.

Mr. Kirk was the near relation of Graham of Duchray, the ancestor of the present General Graham Stirling. Shortly after his funeral he appeared in the dress in which he had sunk down to a mutual relation of his own and of Duchray. "Go," said he to him, "to my cousin Duchray, and tell him that I am not dead. I fell down in a swoon and was carried into Fairyland, where I now am. Tell him that when he and my friends are assembled at the baptism of my child (for he had left his wife pregnant), I will appear in the room, and that, if he throws the knife which he holds in his hand over my head, I will be released and restored to human society." The man, it seems, neglected for some time to deliver the message. Mr. Kirk appeared to him a second time, threatening to haunt him night and day till he executed his commission, which at length he did. The time of the baptism arrived. They were seated at table: Mr. Kirk entered, but the Laird of Duchray, by some unaccountable fatality, neglected to perform the prescribed ceremony. Mr. Kirk retired by another door, and was seen no more. It is firmly believed that he is, at this day, in Fairyland. — *Sketches of Perthshire*, p. 254.

¹ [For a correction of this note, see note to Introduction to *A Legend of Montrose*.]

NOTE 11. — SLAUGHTER OF MACLAREN, p. 278

This, as appears from the introductory matter to this tale, is an anachronism. The slaughter of MacLaren, a retainer of the chief of Appin, by the MacGregors did not take place till after Rob Roy's death, since it happened in 1736.

NOTE 12. — ABERFOIL, p. 280

I do not know how this might ~~appear~~ in Mr. Osbaldistone's day, but I can assure the reader whose curiosity may lead him to visit the scenes of these romantic adventures, that the Clachan of Aberfoil now affords a very comfortable little inn. If he chanced to be a Scottish antiquary, it will be an additional recommendation to him that he will find himself in the vicinity of the Rev. Dr. Patrick Graham, minister of the gospel at Aberfoil, whose urbanity in communicating information on the subject of national antiquities is scarce exceeded even by the stores of legendary lore which he has accumulated. — *Orig. Note.* The respectable 'ergyman alluded to has been dead for some years. — [Added in 1829.]

NOTE 13. — WALTER CUMING OF GULYOCK, p. 287

A great feudal oppressor, who, riding on some cruel purpose through the forest of Gulyock, was thrown from his horse, and, his foot being caught in the stirrup, was dragged along by the frightened animal till he was torn to pieces. The expression, 'Walter of Gulyock's curse,' is proverbial.

NOTE 14. — THE MACRIMMONS, p. 350

The MacRimmons or MacCrimmonds were hereditary pipers to the chiefs of MacLeod, and celebrated for their talents. The pibroch said to have been composed by Helen MacGregor is still in existence. See the Introduction to this Novel (p. xxi).

NOTE 15. — JEDDART CAST, p. 350

'The memory of Dunbar's legal (?) proceedings at Jedburgh is preserved in the proverbial phrase "Jeddart Justice," which signifies trial after execution.' — *Minstrelsy of the Border*, Preface, p. lvi. (*Laing*).

NOTE 16. — MACGREGOR PAPERS, p. 405

Some papers connected with Rob Roy MacGregor, signed 'Ro. Campbell,' in 1711, were lately presented to the Society of Antiquaries. One of these is a kind of contract between the Duke of Montrose and Rob Roy, by which the latter undertakes to deliver within a given time 'Sixtie good and sufficient Kintail highland Cowes, betwixt the age of five and nine years, at fourtene pounds Scotts per peice, with ane bull to the bargane, and that at the head dykes of Buchanan upon the twenty-eight day of May next.' Dated December 1711. — See *Proceedings*, vol. vii. p. 253 (*Laing*).

GLOSSARY

CP

WORDS, PHRASES, AND ALLUSIONS

AD CRUMENAM, to the purse
AIBLINS, perhaps

AIR, oak; AIR-SWAG, an oak stick

AIR, early

AIRS, iron

AITS, oats; AIT, AITEN, oaten
ALCORAN, the Koran, the sacred book of the Moham- medans

ALOUAZIL, a serjeant or officer of police

ALMANZA, BATTLE OF, fought in Spain on 25th April 1707, during the war of the Spanish Succession, the French defeating the allied English and Spanish forces

AMAIST, almost

ANCE, ONES, once; ANCE AND AWA, now and again, occasionally

ANDREA, FERRARA, a broadsword

ANKER, a cask of wine or spirits, about 36 gallons

ARCHILOW, a name; the retainer of one who has a name in a tavern

ARCHIMAGE, a name given in the *Fuérie Queens* to the personification of Hypocrisy; a wizard, magician

ARGYLE'S LEVEE, was more probably written by Joseph Mitchell, 'Sir Robert Walpole's poet'

ARE, an ancient Greek goddess who beguiled men to rash and inconsiderate deeds

AULD-FARRAN, AULD-FARRAND, sagacious, old-fashioned

AVONDOV, the River Forth
AYONT, beside, beyond

BAIK, courtesy

BAN, curse

BAND, bond

BAREFIT, barefooted

BARGHAIST, BARGHEST, a goblin that appeared in the form of a horrible dog, portending misfortune or death. See a note to *The Betrothed*

BARIL, a small brandy cask used in the French (Gascony) retail trade

BARKIT, stripped of bark

BARRICANT, or BARICANT. Identical with Baril (q. v.)

BARRIQUE, or BARIQUE, a hog-head, the brandy cask used at Bourdeaux, Cognac, Rochelle, and towns adjacent

BARTLETT, J., author of *The Gentleman's Furrery* (1754)

BAUDRONS, a pet word for the cat

BAULD, bold

BAWBE, a halfpenny

BEAUX STRATAGEM, by George Farquhar

BEGGAR'S OPERA, Gay's play

BEILD, shelter, protection

BENEDICT, i. e. Benedick. See *Much Ado about Nothing*, Act ii. Sc. 3

BENT, the moor; TAKE THE BENT, see List of Scotch Proverbs, p. 417

BESTED, beset, hard pressed

BICKER, a wooden bowl or vessel; to throw stones, to quarrel; (of a flame) to flicker, quiver

BIENSAËNCE, propriety, decency

BIOOING, building

BIKE, nest, swarm

BIRRIE, lively fellow, youth of mettle, 'spark'

BIRL, toss, drink copiously
BIRRELL, or BIRREL, ROBERT, author of a *Diavey* — 1532-1605

BITTOCK, more than a bit; A MILE AND A BITTOCK, a proverbial expression for a considerable distance longer

BLACK DOUGLAS, Good Sir James Douglas, the valiant supporter of Robert Bruce

BLAYE, a port on the Gironde, France

BLEEZING AND ELASTING, speaking in a loud, ostentatious manner

BLETHER, idle talk, nonsense

BODLE, BODDLE, a copper coin, 1st English half-penny

BOGLE, ghost; scarecrow

BOLE, an aperture

BORE, a crevice

BOUROCK, a small hut, a heap of stones

BRAID, broad

BRECHAN, tartan plaid

BRIG, bridge

BROGUE, Highland shoe

BROKEN MAN, an outlaw

BROOMIELAW, a part of Glasgow harbour

BROSE, pottage made by pouring boiling water over oatmeal

BUDDIELL, or BUIDEAL, a small keg or cask in which spirits were conveyed on pack-saddles from place to place

- BUTH, booth, shop
 BUMBAIRD, confounded, stupefied
 BY, besides. *See* Forbye
- CA', to drive, work; CA' THE-SHUTTLE, a weaver
 CA'D FOR, called for
 CADGER, an itinerant dealer, hawker
 CALLANT, a lad
 CALLER, to cool, freshen
 CAMILLA, the warlike daughter of an ancient Volscian king, a character in the *Aeneid*
 CANET, he sings
 CANNY, cautious, quiet, sensible
 CAP, cup; DRINK CLEAN CAP OUT, drain to the last drop
 CAPTION, arrest by judicial process, a Scots law term
 CARLE, a fellow
 CARLINE, hag
 CARTE DU PAYS, map of the country
 CATERAN, CATHERAN, a robber, thief
 CAULDRIFE, CAULD, cold
 CAUNLE, candle
 CAUP, a shell
 CHACK, snack
 CHAFFS, chops
 CHALDERS, a measure of capacity corresponding to chaldrons, and used to measure corn, lime, coal, etc.
 CHAP, strike (*e. g.* of a clock); CHAPIT, struck
 CHAPPIN, CHOPPEN, a quart measure
 CHAPPING-STICKS, for striking with
 CHEATRY, fraudulent, deceitful
 CHEAT-THE-WUDDY ROGUE, a gallows-bird
 CHIEL, CHIELD, a fellow
 CHUCKIE-STANES, small pebbles
 CLACHAN, hamlet
 CLASH, scandal, gossip, talk
 CLAUTE O' CAULD FARRITCH, scrapings of cold porridge
 CLAYERS, gossip, scandal
 CLERKIT, written
 CLOANTHUS, a follower of Aeneas, who took part in the boat-race of *Aeneid* v.
 CLOOT, hoof, single beast
 CLOW, clove
 COCKET, customs seal or warrant
 COCKLE-HEADED, whimsical, cock-brained
 COG, wooden vessel
 COLLEGE OF ST. OMER'S, a college at St. Omer in Normandy, for educating English and Irish Roman Catholics
 COLLOUSE, to scheme together, intrigue
 COOST, east
 CORBIE, raven, crow
 CORONACH, the Highland lament for the dead
 CORPS DE GARDE, a slip for *garde du corps*
 COSTARD, the head, a humorous term
 COUP, upset; COUP THE CRANE, be upset or overturned; COUP THE CREEK, tumble heels-over-head
 COUR FLÉNIERE, a full, complete gathering of vasaals, dependants
 COUSIN-RED, kinship
 CRACK, to gossip
 CRAIG, the neck, throat; crag, precipice
 CREAUGH, a raid
 CROFTON CROKER, T. The book referred to is *Researches in the South of Ireland*, 1824
 CROPLING, a variety of stock-fish or cod-fish, from 18 to 24 inches in length
 CR-VAE, brisk, cheery
 CRO-DOY, CROWDIE, a thick pottage made of oatmeal
 CRITTLE UP, tickle up, to do for
 CUMRIE, the islands Great and Little Cumbræ in the Firth of Clyde
 CURLIE-WURLIE, ornament on stone
 DAFFIN', chaffing, frolicking
 DAFY, crazy; DAFY DAYS, Christmastide
 DAIKER, jog slowly, hang on irresolutely
 DALTON, MICHAEL, author of *The Country Justice* (1742)
 DARN, or DEEN, conceal
 DAT VENIAM CORVIN, VEXAT CENSURA COLUMBAS, the crows escape, the doves are censured
 DAVIE LINDSAY, the popular name for the popular 16th century Scottish poet, Sir David Lyndsay of the Mount, author of *Satire of the Three Estates*
 DEAN O' GUILD, a magistrate in certain Scotch burghs, who exercises supervision over all buildings
 DING, beat, pull down
 DIRDEN, an ado, disturbance
 DIVOT, a turf, peat
 DOBBIE, sprite, apparition
 DON RAPHAEL AND ANDREW DE LAMELA. *See* *tail* bk. v.
 DOOMS, exceedingly
 DOUCE, gentle
 DOUG, stubborn, reluctant
 DOUGLACH, handle, knapsack
 DOUSELY, soberly, quietly
 DOW, to be able; DOWSA, cannot
 DOW'D, withered
 DRAB DE BERRIE, or DRAB DE BERRI, a thick cloth made in the district of Berri in Central France
 DREE, to suffer
 DROW, cold mist, drizzling shower
 DUNNE-WASSIL, gentleman
 DUKE, THE, the Duke of Montrose
 DURK, dirk
 EEN, eyes
 ELLWAND, a yard measure
 ENEUCH, ENOW, ANEUCH, enough
 ETTLE, intend
 EVEN, compare, put on the same footing with
 EVIDENTS, proofs
 FA'ARD, favoured; IL-FAURED, ugly
 FADDER, an insipid compliment
 FASH, to trouble, concern
 FASHEOUS, terrible
 FASTER'S E'EN, Shrove Tuesday
 FAULD, fold
 FAUSE-FACE, mask
 FECK, part
 FECKLESS, trifling, useless
 FEE AND BOUNTITH, perquisites
 FEMME COUVERTE, a married woman whose rights vested in her husband, a law term
 FEND, shift
 FENWICK'S PLOT, a plot to assassinate William III., the prime agent in which was Sir John Fenwick, executed in January 1697
 FERLIE, wonder, wonderful
 FILE, deile, soil
 FIZZENLESS, devoid of strength, feeble, useless
 Comp. Fusionless
 FLAE, flea
 FLEECH, wheedle
 FLEER, jeer
 FLEG, fright
 FLEY, frighten
 FLOW-MOSS, morass
 FLUF-GIB, explosion of gun-powder

PUTT, mold**PUTT AND A WARMING-PAN.**

It was a popular report that the Pretender was a supposititious child, and was introduced into the royal bed within a warming-pan. An old proverb calls the servant maid the Scotchman's warming-pan. **FOUNTAINIAN PAIR**, literally a marriage market, held at Fountain, at the western end of the Pyrenees.

FORBYE, besides**FORFOUGHEN, breathless,**

blown, exhausted

FORGATHER, encounter, meet

in a hostile sense

FORIS-FAMILIATION, the con-

dition of one emancipated

from parental authority

FORPIT, fourth part of a peck

FOUNDRED (blood-mare),

lame

Fozy, soft, spongy**FULE, fool****FUXIONLESS, without sap,**

withered. Comp. Flizen-

less

GABDART, OF GABARD, a

kind of lighter or barge

used on the Clyde

GALLORGLASS, GALLYGLASS, an

armed retainer

GASOTHEREOUT, wandering,

vagrant

GAR, make, oblige**GASH, sour-looking****GATE, way, manner****GEAR, affair, business; prop-**

erty, possessions

GEDD, a pike**GENTISH, a kind of Flemish**

linen, presumably made at

Gent or Ghent

GIBSON, Wm., author of *The*

Farrier's New Guide

(1720)

GILSON-A-NAILLIE, the k

with the kilt, Highlander.

GILLAVAGING, committing

depredation

GIRDLE-CAKES, thin cakes

cooked on a girdle or

griddle, that is, a flat iron

pan

GLED, twisted**GLEG, smooth and bright****GLEFF, OLIFFING, a jiffy, in-**

stant, moment

GLISK, glance, glimpse**GLOOM, a frown****GLOWR, gaze, stare****GOMERIL, fool, lout****GORBALS, suburbs on the**

south side of Glasgow

GOWD, gold**GOWE, cuckoo, fool****GOWLING AND MOUTING, scold-**

ing and browbeating in

loud tones of voice

GRATILS, OF GRADUALS, a

Roman Catholic service

book containing the anti-

phons and other canticles

GRAT, wept; GREET, to weep**GREW, OF GROU, shudder,**

shiver

GRUE, a pig**GRIT, great****GROUHAM, a coarse fabric**

of silk and wool, usually

stiffened with gum

GRIDMAN, husband head of

the house

GRIDE, deal with, use, em-

ploy

GWILYM, OF GWILLIM, JOHN,

the pen name of the author

of *A Display of Heraldry*,

various editions. The real

writer is said to have been

Dr. John Barkham, Dean

of Bocking

GYAR, a follower of Aeneas,

who took part in the boat-

race of *Aeneid* v.

HADDEN, held**HART, smallest thing con-**

ceivable

HAGGIS, a Scotch pudding

of minced meat, oatmeal,

etc.

HAILL, HALE, whole**HALLON, chimney fellow****HA' NARRA, have never a**

HA NIEL SANNENACH, I can't

speak English

HANTLE, good deal, many

HA NIN GREGARACH, it is a

MacGregor

HARN-PAN, skull**HARNS, brains****HARST, harvest****HAUDING, merris**

AULD, habitation

AVINGS, behaviour

HEATHER-COWE, a twig of

heather

HECKLE, a sharp-toothed in-

strument used for cleaning

flax

HEMPIE, romp, tomboy**HERD, the man who has**

charge of the cattle on a

Scotch farm

HERD-WADDIEFOWS, mad

herdsmen, a man given to

cattle-stealers; WADDIEFOW,

one who deserves to fill a

widdle or halter

HERITOR, a landowner in

Scot. and

HERS-P, plundering**HER, hot****HIE, high****HIGHLAND ROOSE, published**

in 1723; it was written by

Deane

HINDERLINS, buttocks**HODDIE-CRAW, hooked crow**

HODDIE, letter requiring a

debtor to pay or perform,

under pain of being pro-

claimed a rebel

HODDIE-NET, a small net used

for rivulet fishing; an en-

tanglement or confusion

HODDIE, thigh, ham**HODDIE-NUT, lusted, pro-**

voked

HODDIE, hollow**HODDIE, owl****HODDIE, incite, urge on****HODDIE, buttocks****ILE, each, every; ILE ITHIR,**

one another

IMPETRATE, to obtain by pe-

tion

INGAN, onion**INGLE, fire, fireplace****INTROMIT, interfere with,**

touch, the effects of

another, a Scots law term

INVERLOCHY, where Argyle's

forces were defeated by

Montrose in the winter of

1644-45

INSHAM, a kind of Flemish

linen, probably so called

from Issegem, a town in

West Flanders

ITE, CONCLAMATUM EST, Go.

The thing is now pro-

claimed, i. e. published

IVY-TOP, ivy-bush**JALOUSE, be suspicious of,**

object to

JANNOCK, a bannock or cake,

generally of oat-flour

JAUD, jade**JAW, to dash; a wave****JEISTICOR, perhaps from the**

French *justaucorps*, a

tight-fitting jacket

JOCKALE, clasp-knife**JOHNSON'S *Lives of the***

Highwaymen, by Captain

Charles Johnson, published

at Birmingham in 1742

JOHNSTON THE HISTORIAN,

Robert Johnston, author of

two Latin works on the

History of Britain, pub-

lished at Amsterdam in

1642 and 1655

JOSCH, a riding-cloak**JORK (duck) and let the JAW**

(wave) go by

JOWING, tolling of a bell, the

tongue being moved by

hand

- JUDICATUM SOLVI**, acquittal
JUDICIO SINTI, delay of judgment
JURISDICTIONES PANDANDY CAUSAY, for JURISDICTIONES PANDANDY CAUSAY, to have law declared
JUSTIFIED, executed for treason
- KAIL-YARD**, cabbage garden;
KAIL-BLAID, a cabbage leaf;
KAIL WIFE, vegetable seller
KAIN, comb
KAKK, glimpse
KEEP A CALM SOUGH, keep silence; **KERPIT**, kept
KELTY AFF, glass quite empty
KEMP, strive and fight;
KEMPING, a struggle
KERNS, a retainer or servant
KILL-COW, a terrible fellow, desperado
KILTED, elevated, tucked up, lifted
KINDLY TENANTS, tenants whose ancestors have resided for generations on the same lands
KINRICK, kingdom
KINTAILL, a parish in the county of Ross and Cromarty
KITTLE, vexatious, sensitive;
KITTLE CAST, difficult part
KNAF SOUTHRON, speak like the English
KNIGHTSBRIDGE AFFAIR, A Jacobite plot of 1684 to assassinate William III. at Knightsbridge, when returning from hunting. The principal agents were Sir Wm. Barclay and Sir Wm. Perkins
KRAMER, merchants' stalls or booths
KYE, cows
KYLOMS, Highland cattle
KYTIE, seem
- LAIGH KIRK**, or crypt of the cathedral of Glasgow, served for more than two centuries as the church of the Barony parish
LAITH, loth
LANG LUG, a great deal
LANG NEBBIT, long-nosed, used often of preternatural beings
LAPPER, beamear
LASSOCK, girl
LAVE, the remainder, rest
LAWIN, reckoning
LEASING-MAKING, treason
LEDIART, LEDEARD, OF LEDARD, a waterfall near the north side of Loch
- Art. See Waverley, Note 25, p. 477**
LEGENDS, chronicles of the lives of the saints
LEISNA, less not, is not, be-its not
LIGHTFOOT, Dr. JOHN, Vice-Chancellor of Cambridge University in the 17th century
LIGHTLIED, alighted
LILT, to sing cheerful tunes
LIMMER, jade, scow, fool
LINDSAY, DAVID, S. r. David Lindsay
LINKING, rattling, doing anything quickly or glibly; active
LOCHOW, i. e. Loch Awe
LOON, fellow, common man
LOUT, let
LOON, PLUNDERING OF, by a body of Irish commanded by Alexander McDonnell, the Colkitto of *Legend of Montrose*, in 1644
LOUND, quiet
LOUP, leap
LOWE, blaze
LUG FISH, a variety of stock-fish, more than 24 inches in length
LUCKIE, widow; a title applied to a housewife or landlady in general
LUG, the ear; portion
LYMPHADS, the galley which the family of Argyle and others of the Clan Campbell carry in their arms
- MAIDEN**, a rude kind of guilotine formerly used in Scotland
MAIN, THROW A, to throw a cast at dice
MANUALS, the service-books of the priests, containing the sacramental services
MARKHAM, GERVASE, author of *Markham's Maister-piece, containing all Knowledge belonging to Smith, Farrier, or Horse-leech* (1682)
MARMONTEL'S LATE NOVEL, i. e. *Bélisaire* (1767)
MARROW, a partner in marriage
MENSE, good manners
MESSEAN, cur
MICKLE, much
MIDDEN, dun ; **MIDDEN-STEAD**, the place where the dunghill stands
MINTED, made, fabricated, attempted
MIRK, dark; **MIRK HOUR**, midnight
- MIRRA**, Vinton op, by A. H. son in *The Spectator*
MISAMON BEARS, shipped at Mazagan, a port on the Atlantic coast of Morocco
MISGIVIN, maltreat
MISTRAVAT, to alarm
MORNING, an early gram
MOULA, pulverised earth, moulds
MUCKLE, much
MULL, a snuff-box
MURCH, cap
- NAIMBEL**, ownself
NASHGAB, insolent talk
NEN, nose
NREST, nest
NEUK, nook, corner
NEVOY, nephew
NEW TURNIPS, RATS, etc. Swedish turnips, which were introduced in British agriculture about ten or twelve years before the end of the 18th century. The brown rat, which has nearly exterminated or driven out the black rat, is believed to have reached England about the middle of the 18th century
NIPPERTY-TIPPERTY, a facetiously neat or exact
NOWT, NOLT, black-cattle, oxen
- OPENSTEEK**, ornamental stitch
ORRA, occasional, odd
OWE A DAY IN HART, See List of Scotch Proverbs, p. 418
OWSEN, oxen
- PACOLET**, a dwarf, owner of a winged horse, in the legend of *Valentin and Orson*
PAIKS, a drubbing
PALLADIUM, something that affords protection, safety
PAROCHINE, parish
PAT, pot; put
PATERANGES, or **FEDERERES**, small pieces of ordnance used for discharging stones, etc., and for firing salutes
PAUCA VERBA, few words
PAUPERA REGNA, poverty stricken domain
PEARLINS, a kind of lace
PEDRO GARCIAS, See the preface to *Gil Blas*
PENNY-WEDDING, a wedding at which the guests contributed towards the expenses

PRANK, *n.* a small quantity, little piece

PRANKER, an officious fellow who curries favour by proffering his services, a toady

PRANKING, to pick at table, drink fastidiously or in a trifling way

PRAY, a directory of church services for each day throughout the year

PRICK, to strike out with the fork

PRICK, an iron crowbar or lever

PRICK, a reel

PRICKER, a last resource

PRICK - *id.* of a penny; **PRICK AND BAWBLE**, the last penny

PLAYING BOOTY, acting treacherously

PLUCK, mischievous trick

POCK, prank, frolic

POCK, a poke, bag; **POCK-MONEY**, a portmanteau

POCK-PIDDING, a bag pudding; a contemptuous term applied by the Scotch to the English, because of the Englishman's weakness for good living

POULTRY, poultry

POULTRY, *br.* brevities

POSTLETHWAYTE, **MALACHY**, author of *The Universal Dictionary of Trade and Commerce* (1774), translated from the French. *See* Savary below

POT-TOO, *br.* scarecrow

POT'D, *br.* pulled

POW, head

PRETTY MEN, used in Scotch in the sense of the German *pöchtig*, a gallant, alert fellow, prompt and ready with his weapons

PRINCE PRETTYMAN, a character in Buckingham's *Recesses*

PROVOST, a Scotch mayor

QUEEZ-MADDAM, a French pear, the jargonelle

RABBLINGS, mobbings

RADDE, beat, 'baste'

RANSTAM, precipitately

RAP AND REND, rob with violence

RACHE, ready, quick

RAX, stretch

REED, clear up, disentangle; *id.* *id.*

RED WUD, downright mad

REEK, smoke

REFT, robbed

REFTEN, refuge

REFT, prank, trick

REFTEN, roasted, smoked

REFT, to pillage, break

REFTENABLES, that may be set at liberty on security being given

REFT, harbouring and receiving an outlaw or criminal

REFTING THE SCOTS PARLIAMENT, proclaiming the opening of parliament

REFT, roofing, ridge, top of a house

REFTEN APERS, the apers and spur rowels made at Ripon were celebrated

RIVED AND RUGGOT, pulled and struggled in contest

ROCK, spindle

ROCK, praise

ROCK, auction; to sell by auction

ROW, roll

ROWELLING, applying a rowel of iron

RUBBER, robbed

RUDAS, rub, scold

RUE BAROON, court-money

REES, good in faithful

RECKLESS, innocent

REIN, bless

REAP, a stupid, heavy-headed fellow

REAP, a shirt

REAP, suit

REAPERY DES BRULONS, **JACQUES**, author of the work (1733-39) translated, or rather adapted, by Malachy Postlethwayte (*q. v.*)

REAP, a cofmout

SCOTS MILE = 1376 yards, or nearly 9 furlongs

SCREED, rent, torn

SEID RUAS, strike up (the bagpipes)

SELL O'T, itself

SERGEANT KITE, a character in G. Farquhar's *Recruiting Officer*

SEATING, serving

SEPS, becomes, besoms

SETT, pattern

SHABBLE, hanger, cutlass

SHALLOONS, a light woollen stuff, first made at Chalons in France, and used for coat linings and women's dresses

SHAW, a flat at the bottom of a hill

SHELT, very small horse, a Shetland pony

SHERRA, sheriff

SHIP'S HUSBAND, the officer

charged to attend to the provisioning, repairing, entering and clearing of vessels

SHOCK, shock

SHOCK, threaten

SHOCK, speak, such

SHOCK, singed

SINON, the crafty Greek who induced the Trojans to drag the wooden horse inside their walls

SIR JOHN THE GRASSIE, the valiant companion of Wallace, who fell at Falkirk (1298). Theophists of the text refer to the inscription on his sword, in the possession of the Duke of Montrose

SKATH, damage

SKATH, scratch

SKISKER, one who serves out drink

SKIRL, scream

SKIRTON, scream, call

SKIRTON O' DAY, first peep of dawn

SKYER, a wretched fellow

SLABBER, slobber

SLASH A HET HAGGIE, open up a hot or dangerous business

SLINK, a greedy starveling

SLINK, a fool, silly fellow

SNICK, to cut with a sudden stroke

SNICK DRAWER, a sly, cunning person

SNELL, sharp, severe, terrible

SON OF SIRACH, called Ben Sirach, a Jewish writer of Proverbs. The older Jews understood the words to mean Jesus, the author of *Ecclesiastica*

SORN, to sponge, *q. v.* or demand victory; *q. v.* a threatening man. *See* Thizzing and Sorn

SPANG, a leap, spring

SPEER, ask, inquire; **SPEERINGS**, intelligence, tidings

SPORE, a yew, pother

SPOREAN, *q. v.*

STREACH, catch, lifting

STAFF OUT O' MY BACK, heavy loss

STATES, statements

STEER, shut

STEER, stir, molest, meddle with

STEINKIRK (CRAVAT), a richly-laced cravat, loosely knotted, that came into fashion after the battle of Steinkirk (1692) in Belgium

STENTMASTER, assessor of a town or parish

- STIBLER**, clergyman who has no settled charge
STICK HIS HORN IN THE BOG, like a wild bull, get himself stuck fast
STICKIT A SERMON, broke down in the pulpit
STINT, stop, hang back
STOCK-FISH, cod, ling, etc., split and dried without salt; usually cod-fish only is meant
STOT, a bullock
STOUP, a liquid measure
STOW, cut
STRAE, straw
SULLY, MAXIMILIEN DE BETHUNE, DUKE OF, minister to Henry IV. of France
SUPPLE-JACK, a strong pliant man
SYBO, young onion
SYNE, since, ago

TAF, TANE, the one
TASS, a glass, goblet
TATTY-POW, potato-head
TAWPIE, awkward girl
THEFT-FOOT, hush-money, the receiving of stolen goods from a thief against pecuniary consideration
THIGGING AND SORNING, a kind of genteel begging, or rather something between begging and robbing, as extorting cattle or the means of subsistence
THRANG, thronged, busy; bustle
THRAPPLE, throat, windpipe
THRAW, thwart, twist
THROUGHGAUN, a searching cross-examination
THROUGHSTANE, flat grave-stone
THRUM, a story
THRUMS, the loose ends of a piece of woven stuff
TIC, touch
TITHER, other
TITLING, a variety of stock-fish or cod-fish, 18 inches in length
TITYRE, TU PATULE (RECU-BANS SUB TROMINE PAGI), Oh, Tityrus, reclining under the shade of the wide-spreading beech; hence, playing the pastoral poet
TOD, fox; bush
TOLBOOTH, jail
TONNEAU, a hogshead, the brandy cask used at Nantes
TOOK, TUCK, beat of drum
TOOM, empty
TOUPET, or TOUPEE, the top-knot or curl of a periwig
TOW, a rope, hemp
TOWN, in Scotland a house and its dependent cottages
TRIGESIMO SEPTIMO HENRICI OCTAVI, Act 37 Henry VIII.
TROKE, traffic, transact, dabble with
TROT-COSEY, riding-hood
TRUK, took
TUILLIE, scuffle
TURF-BACK, turf bucket
TWAL, twelve
TWASOME, two

UNCASED, undressed
UNCHANCY, dangerous, not safe to meddle with
UNCO, uncommon, considerable; **UNCO THING**, a sad thing
USQUEBAUGH, whisky

VELTES, a liquid measure equal to 6 pints, used in France; so and so many, varying according to the port of shipment, made a hogshead
VERNON SEMPER VIRET, i. e. Vernon flourishes ever, read as, *Ver non semper viret, i. e.* Spring does not last for ever
VIVERS, victuals

WA', wall; way
WAD, would; a bot; a hostage
WADSET, mortgage, a Scots law term
WAE, sorry; **WAEsome**, mournful
WALLY-DRAIGLE, a feeble person, drone, slovenly female
WAME, belly; hollow

WAPPING, stout, strapping
WARTLE, wrestle
WATNA, don't know
WEAN, child
WEDDER, a wether, male sheep
WEIL, eddy
WEIRD, destiny
WEISE, WEIZE, guide, direct
WELL-A-WA' OF WALLA-WAY! an exclamation of sorrow
WHANG, thong
WHREN, a few, some
WHIGMALERIE, gimcrack, fantastical ornament
WHILE SYNE, some time since
WHISK AND SWABBERS, an old form of whist, the card-game
WHITE'S, a London club where about a century ago high play went on
WHITSON TRYSTE, a fair held at Wooler, 20 miles south of Berwick, at Whitsuntide; a similar meeting was held at Whitsunbank Hill, 2 miles from Wooler
WHUMMLE, turn over, upset
WHUFFIT AWA, whipped away, carried off
WIGHT, vallant, courageous
WILL TO CUPAR MAUN TO CUPAR, a wilful man must have his way
WINNA, will not
WINNLE, a frame for winding yarn
WINTERTON, the Earl of Wintoun is meant
WITTING, knowledge
WON TO, reach, arrive at
WOODEN SHOES AND WARMING-PANS, the French and the Pretender. See Foist
WOODIE, a withy. Twigs of willow, such as bind fagots, often used for halters in Scotland and Ireland, being a sage economy of hemp
WOUNDLY, very much, dreadfully
WUD, mad
WUSH, recommend
WUSS, wish
WYTE, blame

YETT, gate, door
YILL, ale

SCOTCH PROVERBS AND FAMILIAR SAYINGS OCCURRING IN ROB ROY

Never put out your arm farther than you can draw it easily back. An instance of Scotch caution.

Bairns and fools speak at the cross what they hear at the ingle side. Children and fools proclaim in public what they overhear at the fireside.

It's a bauld moon, quoth Bennygask; another pint, quoth Lesley. There's a full moon, so that one pint more or less won't matter.

This put (his) beard in a blaze. Stirred up his wrath.

It's neither beef nor brose o' mine. It's no concern of mine.

Then the bent. Taken to flight.

Better a finger aff as aye wagging. Better cut a finger off than let it annoy by hanging.

Better gang farther than fare waur. Better go on than stay here and suffer worse.

Better sune as syne. The sooner the better.

Bluid's thicker than water. An intimation of the strength of kinship.

If a' bowls row (roll) right.

It's ill taking the breeks aff a Highlandman. You can't do what's impossible.

If ye're angry ye ken how to turn the buckle o' your belt behind you. You can prepare to fight it out.

Cadgers maun aye be speaking about cart-saddles. Everybody loves to talk about his own trade.

Keep a calm sough. Keep silent, 'lie low.'

'Can do' is easy carried about wi' aye. Voluntary advice is cheap.

They were ower auld cats to draw that strae afore them. They were too old to be played with in that way.

That chield's aye for being out o' the cheese-fat he was moulded in. He is always forgetting his place.

Thae corbies dinna gather without they smell carrion. Those harpies don't come together without some good reason.

His craig wad ken the weight o' his hurdles. He would be hanged.

As crouse as a cat when the flaes are kaimed aff her. Perfectly contented and happy.

Deil rax their thrapples that reft us o't. The devil wring the necks of those that deprived us of it.

The dell's ower Jock Wabster. All gone wrong (*see Ramsay's Gentle Shepherd*).

I had other eggs on the spit. I had other fish to fry, something else to do.

You have gotten to your English. You are in a passion. *See p. 355.*

If there's a fair day in seven, Sunday's sure to come and lick it up. The one fair day in the week is sure to be lost by falling on a Sunday.

It's a far cry to Lochow. *See p. 276.*

Sent them awa' wi' a flae in their lug. Gave them a sharp reprimand, something to think over.

Let that flee stick in the wa'. Let bygones be bygones.

Forth bridles the wild Highlandman. The Forth is the boundary of the Highlands.

Air day or late day, the fox's hide finds aye the slaying knife. Everything finds its natural fate at last.

As fuslonless as rue leaves at Yule. Altogether feeble and destitute of strength.

The tane gies up a bit and the tither gies up a bit. They make mutual concessions.

The gowk had some reason for singing ance in the year. The fool (cuckoo) has a good reason for singing once a year.
 He has a grey mear in his stable at hame. He has a wife at home.
 A hadden tongue makes a slabbered mouth. It's inconvenient to hold one's tongue.
 Swallow a hair of the dog that had bit me. After being intoxicated over-night, take a dram in the morning.
 It wad be a sair hair in my neck. A constant cause of annoyance, and would give a hold or purchase over me.
 I owe thee a day in harst. A good deed in time of need.
 Is for his ain hand, as Henry Wynd feught. See Note 8, p. 408.
 Nelther to haud nor to bind. Absolutely uncontrollable.
 Hawks pike out hawks' een. One thief injures another.
 The stoutest head bears langest out.
 I'll e'en lay the head o' the sow to the tail o' the grice. I'll take the good with the bad, whatever comes.
 Set the heather on fire. Stir up rebellion or insurrection.
 Let every herring hing by its ain head. Let each be independent.
 Slashed as het a haggis. Been in as difficult or hot a business.
 Stick his horn in the bog. Get himself into a fix.
 Ilka bean has its black and ilka path has its puddle. Every good thing has some drawback.
 Let ilka cock fight his ain battle.
 It's an ill bird that files its ain nest. He's a contemptible wretch who dis-credits his own kindred.
 With iron garters to his hose. With his legs in shackles.
 Jouk and let the jaw gae by. Submit temporarily to what is too strong to be opposed.
 Gle you your kail through the reek. Give you severe punishment.
 Kilited up in a tow. Strung up, hanged.
 The king's errand whiles comes in the cadger's gate. The humblest may sometimes serve the king.
 There's nae gude in speaking ill o' the laird within his ain bounds. Don't speak ill of a man in his own house.
 Cool and come to yoursell like MacGibbon's crowdy when he set it out at the window-hole. See Glossary for 'crowdy' and 'bole.'
 It just a' gaed aff like moonshine in water. It was entirely on the surface.
 Onything is naething. 'Anything' means 'nothing.'
 It maun e'en be ower shoon ower boots wi' me. I must take up the matter heartily and thoroughly, I must go the whole hog.
 Ower many maisters, as the paddock said to the harrow when every tooth gae her a tig. An explanation of the adage, Like a toad under a harrow.
 Pickle in yer ain pock-neuk. Depend on your own exertions.
 Pint-stoups hae lang lugs. Little pitchers have big ears.
 Wind yoursell a bonny pirn. Prepare trouble for yourself.
 Plack and bawbee. The last penny.
 As plain as Peter Pasley's pike-staff. Perfectly plain, self-evident.
 As he can rap and rend means for. Scrape together maintenance for.
 Our ain reek's (smoke) better than other folks' fire.
 Let ilka (each) ane roose (praise) the ford as they find it.
 Shored (threatened) folk live lang.
 A sight for sair een. A most welcome sight.
 There's sma' sorrow at our parting, as the auld mear said to the broken cart. I'm glad to get rid of you.
 He's honest after a sort. See p. 239.
 Never look like a sow playing upon a trump for the luv o' that, man.
 Don't look so dissatisfied and angry.
 Speer (ask) nae questions and I'll tell ye nae lees (lies).
 Make a spune or spoil a horn. Either do great things or make a miserable failure.

A staff out o' my bicker. A serious loss.
Has an unco sway and say. Possesses great influence, power.
Clean through ither. In utter confusion, perplexity.
There's my thumb, I'll ne'er beguile thee. A form of oath.
They had other tow on their rock. Other business on hand.
Every wight has his weird. Everybody has his own individual destiny.
Them that will to Cupar maun to Cupar. A wilful man must have his way.
It's nae mair ferlie to see a woman greet than to see a goose gang barefit.
It's not more strange to see women weep than it is to see a goose with
bare feet.

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THE
WAVERLEY NOVELS
OF
SIR WALTER SCOTT

VOLUME XIII

THE PIRATE



INTRODUCTION TO THE PIRATE

Quoth he, there was a ship.

THIS brief preface may begin like the tale of the *Ancient Mariner*, since it was on shipboard that the Author acquired the very moderate degree of local knowledge and information, both of people and scenery, which he has endeavoured to embody in the romance of the *Pirate*.

In the summer and autumn of 1814, the Author was invited to join a party of Commissioners for the Northern Lighthouse Service, who proposed making a voyage round the coast of Scotland, and through its various groups of islands, chiefly for the purpose of seeing the condition of the many lighthouses under their direction — edifices so important whether regarding them as benevolent or political institutions. Among the commissioners who manage this important public concern, the sheriff of each county of Scotland which borders on the sea holds *ex officio* a place at the Board. These gentlemen act in every respect gratuitously, but have the use of an armed yacht, well found and fitted up, when they choose to visit the lighthouses. An excellent engineer, Mr. Robert Stevenson, is attached to the Board, to afford the benefit of his professional advice. The Author accompanied this expedition as a guest ; for Selkirkshire, though it calls him sheriff, has not, like the kingdom of Bohemia in Corporal Trim's story, a seaport in its circuit, nor its magistrate, of course, any place at the Board of Commissioners — a circumstance of little consequence where all were old and intimate friends, bred to the same profession, and disposed to accommodate each other in every possible manner.

The nature of the important business which was the principal purpose of the voyage was connected with the amusement of visiting the leading objects of a traveller's curiosity ; for the wild cape or formidable shelve which requires to be marked

out by a lighthouse is generally at no great distance from the most magnificent scenery of rocks, caves, and billows. Our time, too, was at our own disposal, and, as most of us were fresh-water sailors, we could at any time make a fair wind out of a foul one, and run before the gale in quest of some object of curiosity which lay under our lee.

With these purposes of public utility, and some personal amusement, in view, we left the port of Leith on the 26th July 1814, ran along the east coast of Scotland, viewing its different curiosities, stood over to Zetland and Orkney, where we were some time detained by the wonders of a country which displayed so much that was new to us; and having seen what was curious in the Ultima Thule of the ancients, where the sun hardly thought it worth while to go to bed, since his rising was at this season so early, we doubled the extreme northern termination of Scotland, and took a rapid survey of the Hebrides, where we found many kind friends. There, that our little expedition might not want the dignity of danger, we were favoured with a distant glimpse of what was said to be an American cruiser, and had opportunity to consider what a pretty figure we should have made had the voyage ended in our being carried captive to the United States. After visiting the romantic shores of Morven and the vicinity of Oban, we made a run to the coast of Ireland and visited the Giant's Causeway, that we might compare it with Staffa, which we had surveyed in our course. At length, about the middle of September, we ended our voyage in the Clyde, at the port of Greenock.¹

And thus terminated our pleasant tour, to which our equipment gave unusual facilities, as the ship's company could form a good boat's crew, independent of those who might be left on board the vessel, which permitted us the freedom to land wherever our curiosity carried us. Let me add, while reviewing for a moment a sunny portion of my life, that among the six or seven friends who performed this voyage together, some of them doubtless of different tastes and pursuits, and remaining for several weeks on board a small vessel, there never occurred the slightest dispute or disagreement, each seeming anxious to submit his own particular wishes to those of his friends. By this mutual accommodation all the purposes of our little expedition were obtained, while for a time we might have adopted the lines of Allan Cunningham's fine sea-song,

¹ [See Lockhart's *Life*, vol. iv. pp. 180-370.]

INTRODUCTION TO THE PIRATE

ix

The world of waters was our home,
And merry men were we !

But sorrow mixes her memorials with the purest remembrances of pleasure. On returning from the voyage which had proved so satisfactory, I found that fate had deprived her country most unexpectedly of a lady qualified to adorn the high rank which she held, and who had long admitted me to a share of her friendship.¹ The subsequent loss of one of those comrades who made up the party, and he the most intimate friend I had in the world,² casts also its shade on recollections which, but for these imbitterments, would be otherwise so satisfactory.

I may here briefly observe, that my business in this voyage, so far as I could be said to have any, was to endeavour to discover some localities which might be useful in the *Lord of the Isles*, a poem with which I was then threatening the public, and which was afterwards printed without attaining remarkable success. But as at the same time the anonymous novel of *Waverley* was making its way to popularity, I already augured the possibility of a second effort in this department of literature, and I saw much in the wild islands of the Orkneys and Zetland which I judged might be made in the highest degree interesting, should these isles ever become the scene of a narrative of fictitious events. I learned the history of Gow the pirate from an old sibyl (see Note 14, p. 454), whose principal subsistence was by a trade in favourable winds, which she sold to mariners at Stromness. Nothing could be more interesting than the kindness and hospitality of the gentlemen of Zetland, which was to me the more affecting as several of them had been friends and correspondents of my father.

I was induced to go a generation or two further back to find materials from which I might trace the features of the

¹ Harriet Katherine, Duchess of Buccleuch, died 24th August 1814 (*Laing*).

² William Erskine of Kinnedder, son of an Episcopal minister in Perthshire, was educated for the legal profession, and passed advocate 3d July 1790. He was appointed Sheriff-Depute of Orkney 6th June 1809, and in that capacity, was accompanied by Scott in the Lighthouse voyage round the coast. He was raised to the bench, and took his seat as Lord Kinnedder 29th January 1822. Unfortunately, he did not long enjoy this honour, as he died unexpectedly on the 14th of August following, to the great grief of Sir Walter, who at this very time was wholly occupied with the arrangements connected with George IV.'s visit to Edinburgh. Lord Kinnedder, to whom Scott had from boyhood been deeply attached, was a most amiable and accomplished man.

In 1788, when the *Ode on the Popular Superstitions of the Highlands* was first published (which the Warton's thought superior to the other works of Collins, but which Dr. Johnson says, 'no search has yet found'), Mr. Erskine wrote several supplementary stanzas, intended to commemorate some Scottish superstitions omitted by Collins. These verses first appeared in the *Edinburgh Magazine* for April 1788 (*Laing*).

old Norwegian udaller, the Scottish gentry having in general occupied the place of that primitive race, and their language and peculiarities of manner having entirely disappeared. The only difference now to be observed betwixt the gentry of these islands and those of Scotland in general is, that the wealth and property is more equally divided among our more northern countrymen, and that there exists among the resident proprietors no men of very great wealth, whose display of its luxuries might render the others discontented with their own lot. From the same cause of general equality of fortunes, and the cheapness of living which is its natural consequence, I found the officers of a veteran regiment who had maintained the garrison at Fort Charlotte, in Lerwick, discomposed at the idea of being recalled from a country where their pay, however inadequate to the expenses of a capital, was fully adequate to their wants, and it was singular to hear natives of merry England herself regretting their approaching departure from the melancholy isles of the Ultima Thule.

Such are the trivial particulars attending the origin of that publication, which took place several years later than the agreeable journey in which it took its rise.

The state of manners which I have introduced in the romance was necessarily in a great degree imaginary, though founded in some measure on slight hints, which, showing what was, seemed to give reasonable indication of what must once have been, the tone of the society in these sequestered but interesting islands.

In one respect I was judged somewhat hastily, perhaps, when the character of Norna was pronounced by the critics a mere copy of Meg Merrilies. That I had fallen short of what I wished and desired to express is unquestionable, otherwise my object could not have been so widely mistaken; nor can I yet think that any person who will take the trouble of reading the *Pirate* with some attention can fail to trace in Norna — the victim of remorse and insanity, and the dupe of her own imposture, her mind, too, flooded with all the wild literature and extravagant superstitions of the North — something distinct from the Dumfriesshire gipsy, whose pretensions to supernatural powers are not beyond those of a Norwood prophetess. The foundations of such a character may be perhaps traced, though it be too true that the necessary superstructure cannot have been raised upon them, otherwise these remarks would have been unnecessary. There is also great improbability in the statement of Norna's possessing power and opportunity to

INTRODUCTION TO THE PIRATE xi

impress on others that belief in her supernatural powers which distracted her own mind. Yet, amid a very credulous and ignorant population, it is astonishing what success may be attained by an impostor who is, at the same time, an enthusiast. It is such as to remind us of the couplet which assures us that

The pleasure is as great
Of being cheated as to cheat.

Indeed, as I have observed elsewhere, the professed explanation of a tale, where appearances or incidents of a supernatural character are explained on natural causes, has often, in the winding up of the story, a degree of improbability almost equal to an absolute goblin tale. Even the genius of Mrs. Radcliffe could not always surmount this difficulty.

ABBOTSFORD, *1st May* 1831.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE FIRST EDITION

THE purpose of the following narrative is to give a detailed and accurate account of certain remarkable incidents which took place in the Orkney Islands, concerning which the more imperfect traditions and mutilated records of the country only tell us the following erroneous particulars :—

In the month of January 1724–25, a vessel, called the ‘Revenge,’ bearing twenty large guns and six smaller, commanded by John Gow, or Goffe, or Smith, came to the Orkney Islands, and was discovered to be a pirate by various acts of insolence and villany committed by the crew. These were for some time submitted to, the inhabitants of the remote islands not possessing arms nor means of resistance ; and so bold was the captain of these banditti, that he not only came ashore and gave dancing-parties in the village of Stromness, but, before his real character was discovered, engaged the affections, and received the troth-plight, of a young lady possessed of some property. A patriotic individual, James Fea, younger of Clestron, formed the plan of securing the buccanier, which he effected by a mixture of courage and address, in consequence chiefly of Gow’s vessel having gone on shore near the harbour

of Calfsound, on the Island of Eda, not far distant from a house then inhabited by Mr. Fea. In the various stratagems by which Mr. Fea contrived finally, at the peril of his life (they being well armed and desperate), to make the whole pirates his prisoners, he was much aided by Mr. James Laing, the grandfather of the late Malcolm Laing, Esq.,¹ the acute and ingenious historian of Scotland during the 17th century.

Gow and others of his crew suffered, by sentence of the High Court of Admiralty, the punishment their crimes had long deserved. He conducted himself with great audacity when before the court; and, from an account of the matter by an eye-witness, seems to have been subjected to some unusual severities in order to compel him to plead. The words are these: 'John Gow would not plead, for which he was brought to the bar, and the Judge ordered that his thumbs should be squeezed by two men, with a whip-cord, till it did break; and then it should be doubled, till it did again break, and then laid threefold, and that the executioners should pull with their whole strength; which sentence Gow endured with a great deal of boldness.' The next morning (27th May 1725), when he had seen the terrible preparations for pressing him to death, his courage gave way, and he told the marshal of court that he would not have given so much trouble had he been assured of not being hanged in chains. He was then tried, condemned, and executed, with others of his crew.

It is said that the lady whose affections Gow had engaged went up to London to see him before his death, and that, arriving too late, she had the courage to request a sight of his dead body; and then, touching the hand of the corpse, she formally resumed the troth-plight which she had bestowed. Without going through this ceremony, she could not, according to the superstition of the country, have escaped a visit from the ghost of her departed lover, in the event of her bestowing upon any living suitor the faith which she had plighted to the dead. This part of the legend may serve as a curious commentary on the fine Scottish ballad² which begins,

There came a ghost to Margaret's door, etc.

¹ This gentleman was called to the Scotch Bar in the year 1784, but the infirm state of his health induced him, in 1810, to leave the profession, and to reside on his paternal property near Kirkwall, devoting himself to agricultural pursuits. He died in November 1818, aged fifty-five, and was interred in the nave of St. Magnus's Cathedral (*Laing*).

² This ballad of 'Willie's Ghost' is printed in *Herd's Collection*, vol. I, p. 76. It is not so well known as Mallet's version, 'Willie and Margaret,' which begins, 'T was at the fearful midnight hour' (*Laing*).

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The common account of this incident farther bears, that Mr. Fea, the spirited individual by whose exertions Gow's career of iniquity was cut short, was so far from receiving any reward from Government, that he could not obtain even countenance enough to protect him against a variety of sham suits, raised against him by Newgate solicitors, who acted in the name of Gow and others of the pirate crew; and the various expenses, vexatious prosecutions, and other legal consequences, in which his gallant exploit involved him, utterly ruined his fortune and his family; making his memory a notable example to all who shall in future take pirates on their own authority.

It is to be supposed, for the honour of George the First's Government, that the last circumstance, as well as the dates, and other particulars of the commonly received story, are inaccurate, since they will be found totally irreconcilable with the following veracious narrative, compiled from materials to which he himself alone has had access, by

THE AUTHOR OF *WAVERLEY*

December, 1821.

THE PIRATE

CHAPTER I

The storm had ceased its wintry roar,
Hoarse dash the billows of the sea ;
But who on Thule's desert shore
Cries, Have I burnt my harp for thee ?

MACNIEL.

THAT long, narrow, and irregular island, usually called the mainland of Zetland, because it is by far the largest of that archipelago, terminates, as is well known to the mariners who navigate the stormy seas which surround the Thule of the ancients, in a cliff of immense height, entitled Sumburgh Head, which presents its bare scalp and naked sides to the weight of a tremendous surge, forming the extreme point of the isle to the south-east. This lofty promontory is constantly exposed to the current of a strong and furious tide, which, setting in betwixt the Orkney and Zetland Islands, and running with force only inferior to that of the Pentland Firth, takes its name from the headland we have mentioned, and is called the Roost of Sumburgh — 'roost' being the phrase assigned in these isles to currents of this description.

On the land side, the promontory is covered with short grass, and slopes steeply down to a little isthmus, upon which the sea has encroached in creeks, which, advancing from either side of the island, gradually work their way forward, and seem as if in a short time they would form a junction and altogether insulate Sumburgh Head, when what is now a cape will become a lonely mountain islet, severed from the Mainland, of which it is at present the terminating extremity.

Man, however, had in former days considered this as a remote or unlikely event ; for a Norwegian chief of other times, or,

as other accounts said, and as the name of Jarlshof seemed to imply, an ancient Earl of the Orkneys, had selected this neck of land as the place for establishing a mansion-house. It has been long entirely deserted, and the vestiges only can be discerned with difficulty; for the loose sand, borne on the tempestuous gales of those stormy regions, has overblown and almost buried the ruins of the buildings; but in the end of the 17th century a part of the earl's mansion was still entire and habitable. It was a rude building of rough stone, with nothing about it to gratify the eye or to excite the imagination; a large old-fashioned narrow house, with a very steep roof, covered with flags composed of grey sandstone, would perhaps convey the best idea of the place to a modern reader. The windows were few, very small in size, and distributed up and down the building with utter contempt of regularity. Against the main structure had rested, in former times, certain smaller compartments of the mansion-house, containing offices, or subordinate apartments, necessary for the earl's retainers and menials. But these had become ruinous; and the rafters had been taken down for firewood or for other purposes; the walls had given way in many places; and, to complete the devastation, the sand had already drifted amongst the ruins, and filled up what had been once the chambers they contained, to the depth of two or three feet.

Amid this desolation, the inhabitants of Jarlshof had contrived, by constant labour and attention, to keep in order a few roods of land, which had been inclosed as a garden, and which, sheltered by the walls of the house itself from the relentless sea-blast, produced such vegetables as the climate could bring forth, or rather as the sea-gale would permit to grow; for these islands experience even less of the rigour of cold than is encountered on the mainland of Scotland; but, unsheltered by a wall of some sort or other, it is scarce possible to raise even the most ordinary culinary vegetables; and as for shrubs or trees, they are entirely out of the question, such is the force of the sweeping sea-blast.

At a short distance from the mansion, and near to the sea-beach, just where the creek forms a sort of imperfect harbour, in which lay three or four fishing-boats, there were a few most wretched cottages for the inhabitants and tenants of the township of Jarlshof, who held the whole district of the landlord upon such terms as were in those days usually granted to persons of this description, and which, of course, were hard enough.

The landlord himself resided upon an estate which he possessed in a more eligible situation in a different part of the island, and seldom visited his possessions at Sumburgh Head. He was an honest, plain Zetland gentleman, somewhat passionate, the necessary result of being surrounded by dependants; and somewhat over-convivial in his habits, the consequence, perhaps, of having too much time at his disposal; but frank-tempered and generous to his people, and kind and hospitable to strangers. He was descended also of an old and noble Norwegian family — a circumstance which rendered him dearer to the lower orders, most of whom are of the same race; while the lairds, or proprietors, — generally of Scottish extraction, who, at that early period, were still considered as strangers and intruders. Magnus Troil, who deduced his descent from the very earl who was supposed to have founded Jarlshof, was peculiarly of this opinion.

The present inhabitants of Jarlshof had experienced, on several occasions, the kindness and good-will of the proprietor of the territory. When Mr. Mertoun — such was the name of the present inhabitant of the old mansion — first arrived in Zetland, some years before the story commences, he had been received at the house of Mr. Troil with that warm and cordial hospitality for which the islands are distinguished. No one asked him whence he came, where he was going, what was his purpose in visiting so remote a corner of the empire, or what was likely to be the term of his stay. He arrived a perfect stranger, yet was instantly overpowered by a succession of invitations; and in each house which he visited he found a home as long as he chose to accept it, and lived as one of the family, unnoticed and unnoticing, until he thought proper to remove to some other dwelling. This apparent indifference to the rank, character, and qualities of their guest did not arise from apathy on the part of his kind hosts, for the islanders had their full share of natural curiosity; but their delicacy deemed it would be an infringement upon the laws of hospitality to ask questions which their guest might have found it difficult or unpleasing to answer; and instead of endeavouring, as is usual in other countries, to wring out of Mr. Mertoun such communications as he might find it agreeable to withhold, the considerate Zetlanders contented themselves with eagerly gathering up such scraps of information as could be collected in the course of conversation.

But the rock in an Arabian desert is not more reluctant to

afford water than Mr. Basil Mertoun was niggard in imparting his confidence, even incidentally; and certainly the politeness of the gentry of Thule was never put to a more severe test than when they felt that good-breeding enjoined them to abstain from inquiring into the situation of so mysterious a personage.

All that was actually known of him was easily summed up. Mr. Mertoun had come to Lerwick, then rising into some importance, but not yet acknowledged as the principal town of the island, in a Dutch vessel, accompanied only by his son, a handsome boy of about fourteen years old. His own age might exceed forty. The Dutch skipper introduced him to some of the very good friends with whom he used to barter gin and gingerbread for little Zetland bullocks, smoked geese, and stockings of lambs' wool; and although Meinherr could only say that, 'Meinherr Mertoun hab bay his bassage like one gentlemen, and hab given a kreitz-dollar beside to the crew,' this introduction served to establish the Dutchman's passenger in a respectable circle of acquaintances, which gradually enlarged, as it appeared that the stranger was a man of considerable acquirements.

This discovery was made almost *per force*; for Mertoun was as unwilling to speak upon general subjects as upon his own affairs. But he was sometimes led into discussions, which showed, as it were in spite of himself, the scholar and the man of the world; and at other times, as if in requital of the hospitality which he experienced, he seemed to compel himself, against his fixed nature, to enter into the society of those around him, especially when it assumed the grave, melancholy, or satirical cast which best suited the temper of his own mind. Upon such occasions, the Zetlanders were universally of opinion that he must have had an excellent education, neglected only in one striking particular, namely, that Mr. Mertoun scarce knew the stem of a ship from the stern; and in the management of a boat a cow could not be more ignorant. It seemed astonishing, such gross ignorance of the most necessary art of life, in the Zetland Isles at least, should subsist along with his accomplishments in other respects; but so it was.

Unless called forth in the manner we have mentioned, the habits of Basil Mertoun were retired and gloomy. From loud mirth he instantly fled; and even the moderated cheerfulness of a friendly party had the invariable effect of throwing him into deeper dejection than even his usual demeanour indicated.

Women are always particularly desirous of investigating mystery and of alleviating melancholy, especially when these circumstances are united in a handsome man about the prime of life. It is possible, therefore, that amongst the fair-haired and blue-eyed daughters of Thule this mysterious and pensive stranger might have found some one to take upon herself the task of consolation, had he shown any willingness to accept such kindly offices; but, far from doing so, he seemed even to shun the presence of the sex to which in our distresses, whether of mind or body, we generally apply for pity and comfort.

To these peculiarities Mr. Mertoun added another, which was particularly disagreeable to his host and principal patron, Magnus Troil. This magnate of Zetland, descended by the father's side, as we have already said, from an ancient Norwegian family, by the marriage of its representative with a Danish lady, held the devout opinion that a cup of Geneva or Nantz was specific against all cares and afflictions whatever. These were remedies to which Mr. Mertoun never applied: his drink was water, and water alone, and no persuasion or entreaties could induce him to taste any stronger beverage than was afforded by the pure stream. Now this Magnus Troil could not tolerate; it was a defiance to the ancient Northern laws of conviviality, which, for his own part, he had so rigidly observed that, although he was wont to assert that he had never in his life gone to bed drunk (that is, in his own sense of the word), it would have been impossible to prove that he had ever resigned himself to slumber in a state of actual and absolute sobriety. It may be therefore asked, What did this stranger bring into society to compensate the displeasure given by his austere and abstemious habits? He had, in the first place, that manner and self-importance which mark a person of some consequence; and although it was conjectured that he could not be rich, yet it was certainly known by his expenditure that neither was he absolutely poor. He had, besides, some powers of conversation, when, as we have already hinted, he chose to exert them, and his misanthropy or aversion to the business and intercourse of ordinary life was often expressed in an antithetical manner, which often passed for wit, when better was not to be had. Above all, Mr. Mertoun's secret seemed impenetrable, and his presence had all the interest of a riddle, which men love to read over and over, because they cannot find out the meaning of it.

Notwithstanding these recommendations, Mertoun differed

in so many material points from his host, that, after he had been for some time a guest at his principal residence, Magnus Troil was agreeably surprised when, one evening, after they had sat two hours in absolute silence, drinking brandy and water — that is, Magnus drinking the alcohol and Mertoun the element — the guest asked his host's permission to occupy, as his tenant, this deserted mansion of Jarlshof, at the extremity of the territory called Dunrossness, and situated just beneath Sumburgh Head. 'I shall be handsomely rid of him,' quoth Magnus to himself, 'and his kill-joy visage will never again stop the bottle in its round. His departure will ruin me in lemons, however, for his mere look was quite sufficient to sour a whole ocean of punch.'

Yet the kind-hearted Zetlander generously and disinterestedly remonstrated with Mr. Mertoun on the solitude and inconveniences to which he was about to subject himself. 'There were scarcely,' he said, 'even the most necessary articles of furniture in the old house; there was no society within many miles; for provisions, the principal article of food would be sour sillocks, and his only company gulls and gannets.'

'My good friend,' replied Mertoun, 'if you could have named a circumstance which would render the residence more eligible to me than any other, it is that there would be neither human luxury nor human society near the place of my retreat: a shelter from the weather for my own head and for the boy's is all I seek for. So name your rent, Mr. Troil, and let me be your tenant at Jarlshof.'

'Rent!' answered the Zetlander; 'why, no great rent for an old house which no one has lived in since my mother's time — God rest her! — and as for shelter, the old walls are thick enough, and will bear many a bang yet. But, Heaven love you, Mr. Mertoun, think what you are purposing. For one of us to live at Jarlshof were a wild scheme enough; but you, who are from another country, whether English, Scotch, or Irish, no one can tell —'

'Nor does it greatly matter,' said Mertoun, somewhat abruptly.

'Not a herring's scale,' answered the laird; 'only, that I like you the better for being no Scot, as I trust you are not one. Hither they have come like the clack-geese: every chamberlain has brought over a flock of his own name, and his own hatching, for what I know, and here they roost for ever, catch them returning to their own barren Highlands or Low-

lands, when once they have tasted our Zetland beef and seen our bonny voes and lochs. No, sir' — here Magnus proceeded with great animation, sipping from time to time the half-diluted spirit, which at the same time animated his resentment against the intruders and enabled him to endure the mortifying reflection which it suggested — 'no, sir, the ancient days and the genuine manners of these islands are no more; for our ancient possessors — our Patersons, our Fens, our Schlagbrenners, our Thorbiorns — have given place to Giffords, Scotts, Mouats, men whose names bespeak them or their ancestors strangers to the soil which we the Troils have inhabited long before the days of Turf-Einar, who first taught these isles the mystery of burning peat for fuel, and who has been handed down to a grateful posterity by a name which records the discovery.'

This was a subject upon which the potentate of Jarlshof was usually very diffuse, and Mertoun saw him enter upon it with pleasure, because he knew he should not be called upon to contribute any aid to the conversation, and might therefore indulge his own saturnine humour while the Norwegian Zetlander declaimed on the change of times and inhabitants. But just as Magnus had arrived at the melancholy conclusion, 'How probable it was that, in another century, scarce a "merk," scarce even an "ure," of land would be in the possession of the Norse inhabitants, the true udallers¹ of Zetland,' he recollected the circumstances of his guest, and stopped suddenly short. 'I do not say all this,' he added, interrupting himself, 'as if I were unwilling that you should settle on my estate, Mr. Mertoun. But for Jarlshof — the place is a wild one. Come from where you will, I warrant you will say, like other travellers, you came from a better climate than ours, for so say you all. And yet you think of a retreat which the very natives run away from. Will you not take your glass? — (This was to be considered as interjectional) — Then here's to you.'

'My good sir,' answered Mertoun, 'I am indifferent to climate: if there is but air enough to fill my lungs, I care not if it be the breath of Arabia or of Lapland.'

'Air enough you may have,' answered Magnus, 'no lack of that; somewhat damp, strangers allege it to be, but we know a corrective for that. Here's to you, Mr. Mertoun. You must learn to *do so*, and to smoke a pipe; and then, as you say, you will find the air of Zetland equal to that of Arabia. But have you seen Jarlshof?'

¹ See Note 1.

The stranger intimated that he had not.

'Then,' replied Magnus, 'you have no idea of your undertaking. If you think it a comfortable roadstead like this, with the house situated on the side of an inland voe,¹ that brings the herrings up to your door, you are mistaken, my heart. At Jarlahof you will see nought but the wild waves tumbling on the bare rocks, and the Roost of Sumburgh running at the rate of fifteen knots an hour.'

'I shall see nothing at least of the current of human passions,' replied Mertoun.

'You will hear nothing but the clanging and screaming of scarts, sheerwaters, and sea-gulls from daybreak till sunset.'

'I will compound, my friend,' replied the stranger, 'so that I do not hear the chattering of women's tongues.'

'Ah,' said the Norman, 'that is because you hear just now my little Minna and Brenda singing in the garden with your Mordaunt. Now, I would rather listen to their little voices than the skylark which I once heard in Caithness, or the nightingale that I have read of. What will the girls do for want of their playmate Mordaunt?'

'They will shift for themselves,' answered Mertoun: 'younger or elder, they will find playmates or dupes. But the question is, Mr. Troil, will you let to me, as your tenant, this old mansion of Jarlahof?'

'Gladly, since you make it your option to live in a spot so desolate.'

'And as for the rent?' continued Mertoun.

'The rent!' replied Magnus; 'hum — why, you must have the bit of "plantie cruive,"² which they once called a garden, and a right in the "scathold," and a sixpenny merk of land, that the tenants may fish for you; eight "lispunds"³ of butter and eight shillings sterling yearly is not too much?'

Mr. Mertoun agreed to terms so moderate, and from thence forward resided chiefly at the solitary mansion which we have described in the beginning of this chapter, conforming not only without complaint, but, as it seemed, with a sullen pleasure, to all the privations which so wild and desolate a situation necessarily imposed on its inhabitant.

¹ Salt-water lake.

² See Note 2.

³ A lispund is about thirty pounds English, and the value is averaged by Dr. Edmonston at ten shillings sterling.



MAGNUS TROIL AND HIS DAUGHTERS.
From a painting by Robert Herdman, R.S.A.



CHAPTER 17

'T is not alone the seas; the man, Anselmo,
The man finds sympathies in these wild wastes
And roughly tumbling seas, which fairer views
And smoother waves deny him.

Ancient Drama.

THE few inhabitants of the township of Jarlshof had at first heard with alarm that a person of rank superior to their own was come to reside in the ruinous tenement which they still called the castle. In those days (for the present times are greatly altered for the better) the presence of a superior, in such a situation, was almost certain to be attended with additional burdens and exactions, for which, under one pretext or another, feudal customs furnished a thousand apologies. By each of these, a part of the tenants' hard-won and precarious profits was diverted for the use of their powerful neighbour and superior, the tacksman, as he was called. But the sub-tenants speedily found that no oppression of this kind was to be apprehended at the hands of Basil Mertoun. His own means, whether large or small, were at least fully adequate to his expenses, which, so far as regarded his habits of life, were of the most frugal description. The luxuries of a few books, and some philosophical instruments, with which he was supplied from London as occasion offered, seemed to indicate a degree of wealth unusual in these islands; but, on the other hand, the table and the accommodations at Jarlshof did not exceed what was maintained by a Zetland proprietor of the most inferior description.

The tenants of the hamlet troubled themselves very little about the quality of their superior, as soon as they found that their situation was rather to be mended than rendered worse by his presence; and, once relieved from the apprehension of his tyrannising over them, they laid their heads together to make the most of him by various petty tricks of overcharge

and extortion, which for a while the stranger submitted to with the most philosophic indifference. An incident, however, occurred which put his character in a new light, and effectually checked all future efforts at extravagant imposition.

A dispute arose in the kitchen of the castle betwixt an old governante, who acted as housekeeper to Mr. Mertoun, and Sweyn Erickson, as good a Zetlander as ever rowed a boat to the 'haaf fishing';¹ which dispute, as is usual in such cases, was maintained with such increasing heat and vociferation as to reach the ears of the master (as he was called), who, secluded in a solitary turret, was deeply employed in examining the contents of a new package of books from London, which, after long expectation, had found its way to Hull, from thence by a whaling vessel to Lerwick, and so to Jarlshof. With more than the usual thrill of indignation which indolent people always feel when roused into action on some unpleasant occasion, Mertoun descended to the scene of contest, and so suddenly, peremptorily, and strictly inquired the cause of dispute, that the parties, notwithstanding every evasion which they attempted, became unable to disguise from him that their difference respected the several interests to which the honest governante and no less honest fisherman were respectively entitled in an overcharge of about one hundred per cent on a bargain of rock-cod, purchased by the former from the latter, for the use of the family at Jarlshof.

When this was fairly ascertained and confessed, Mr. Mertoun stood looking upon the culprits with eyes in which the utmost scorn seemed to contend with awakening passion. 'Hark you, ye old hag,' said he at length to the housekeeper, 'avoid my house this instant! and know that I dismiss you, not for being a liar, a thief, and an ungrateful quean — for these are qualities as proper to you as your name of woman — but for daring, in my house, to scold above your breath. And for you, you rascal, who suppose you may cheat a stranger as you would flinch² a whale, know that I am well acquainted with the rights which, by delegation from your master, Magnus Troil, I can exercise over you, if I will. Provoke me to a certain pitch, and you shall learn, to your cost, I can break your rest as easily as you can interrupt my leisure. I know the meaning of "scat," and "wattle," and "hawkhen," and "hagalef," and

¹ i. e. the deep-sea fishing, in distinction to that which is practised along shore.

² The operation of slicing the blubber from the bones of the whale is called, technically, *finching*.

every other exaction by which your lords, in ancient and modern days, have wrung your withers; nor is there one of you that shall not rue the day that you could not be content with robbing me of my money, but must also break in on my leisure with your atrocious Northern clamour, that rivals in discord the screaming of a flight of Arctic gulls.'

Nothing better occurred to Sweyn, in answer to this objur-gation, than the preferring a humble request that his honour would be pleased to keep the cod-fish without payment, and say no more about the matter; but by this time Mr. Mertoun had worked up his passions into an ungovernable rage, and with one hand he threw the money at the fisherman's head, while with the other he pelted him out of the apartment with his own fish, which he finally flung out of doors after him.

There was so much of appalling and tyrannic fury in the stranger's manner on this occasion, that Sweyn neither stopped to collect the money nor take back his commodity, but fled at a precipitate rate to the small hamlet, to tell his comrades that, if they provoked Master Mertoun any farther, he would turn an absolute Pate Stewart¹ on their hand, and head and hang without either judgment or mercy.

Hither also came the discarded housekeeper, to consult with her neighbours and kindred (for she too was a native of the village) what she should do to regain the desirable situation from which she had been so suddenly expelled. The old Ranzellaar of the village, who had the voice most potential in the deliberations of the township, after hearing what had happened, pronounced Sweyn Erickson had gone too far in raising the market. Mr. Mertoun; and that, whatever pretext the tacksman might assume for thus giving way to his anger, the real grievance must have been the charging the rock cod-fish at a penny instead of a half-penny a pound; he therefore exhorted all the community never to raise their exactions in future beyond the proportion of three pence upon the shilling, at which rate their master at the castle could not reasonably be expected to grumble, since, as he was disposed to do them no harm, it was reasonable to think that, in a moderate way, he had no objection to do them good. 'And three upon twelve,' said the experienced Ranzellaar, 'is a decent and moderate profit, and will bring with it God's blessing and St. Ronald's.'

¹ Meaning, probably, Patrick Stewart, Earl of Orkney, executed for tyranny and oppression, practised on the inhabitants of these remote islands, in the beginning of the 17th century. — His father, Lord Robert Stuart, was a natural son of James V. (*Laing*).

Proceeding upon the tariff thus judiciously recommended to them, the inhabitants of Jarlshof cheated Mertoun in future only to the moderate extent of twenty-five per cent — a rate to which all nabobs, army-contractors, speculators in the funds, and others, whom recent and rapid success has enabled to settle in the country upon a great scale, ought to submit as very reasonable treatment at the hand of their rustic neighbours. Mertoun at least seemed of that opinion, for he gave himself no farther trouble upon the subject of his household expenses.

The conscript fathers of Jarlshof, having settled their own matters, took next under their consideration the case of Swertha, the banished matron who had been expelled from the castle, whom, as an experienced and useful ally, they were highly desirous to restore to her office of housekeeper, should that be found possible. But as their wisdom here failed them, Swertha, in despair, had recourse to the good offices of Mordaunt Mertoun, with whom she had acquired some favour by her knowledge in old Norwegian ballads, and dismal tales concerning the Trows, or Drows (the dwarfs of the Scalds), with whom superstitious old had peopled many a lonely cavern and brown dale in Dunrossness, as in every other district of Zetland. 'Swertha,' said the youth, 'I can do but little for you, but you may do something for yourself. My father's passion resembles the fury of those ancient champions — those Berserkars, you sing songs about.'

'Ay — ay, fish of my heart,' replied the old woman, with a pathetic whine; 'the Berserkars were champions who lived before the blessed days of St. Olave, and who used to run like madmen on swords, and spears, and harpoons, and muskets, and snap them all into pieces, as a finner¹ would go through a herring-net, and then, when the fury went off, they were as weak and unstable as water.'²

'That's the very thing, Swertha,' said Mordaunt. 'Now, my father never likes to think of his passion after it is over, and is so much of a Berserkar that, let him be desperate as he will to-day, he will not care about it to-morrow. Therefore, he has not filled up your place in the household at the castle, and not a mouthful of warm food has been dressed there since you went away, and not a morsel of bread baked, but we have lived just upon whatever cold thing came to hand. Now, Swertha, I will be your warrant that, if you go boldly up to the castle, and enter upon the discharge of your duties as usual, you will never hear a single word from him.'

¹ *Finner*, small whale.

² See Note 3.

Swertha hesitated at first to obey this bold counsel. She said, 'To her thinking, Mr. Mertoun, when he was angry, looked more like a fiend than any Berserker of them all : that the fire flashed from his eyes, and the foam flew from his lips ; and that it would be a plain tempting Providence to put herself again in such a venture.'

But, on the encouragement which she received from the son, she determined at length once more to face the parent ; and, dressing herself in her ordinary household attire, for so Mordaunt particularly recommended, she slipped into the castle, and presently resuming the various and numerous occupations which devolved on her, seemed as deeply engaged in household cares as if she had never been out of office.

The first day of her return to her duty, Swertha made no appearance in presence of her master, but trusted that after his three days' diet on cold meat, a hot dish, dressed with the best of her simple skill, might introduce her favourably to his recollection. When Mordaunt had reported that his father had taken no notice of this change of diet, and when she herself observed that, in passing and repassing him occasionally, her appearance produced no effect upon her singular master, she began to imagine that the whole affair had escaped Mr. Mertoun's memory, and was active in her duty as usual. Neither was she convinced of the contrary until one day when, happening somewhat to elevate her tone in a dispute with the other maid-servant, her master, who at that time passed the place of contest, eyed her with a strong glance, and pronounced the single word, 'Remember !' in a tone which taught Swertha the government of her tongue for many weeks after.

If Mertoun was whimsical in his mode of governing his household, he seemed no less so in his plan of educating his son. He showed the youth but few symptoms of parental affection ; yet, in his ordinary state of mind, the improvement of Mordaunt's education seemed to be the utmost object of his life. He had both books and information sufficient to discharge the task of tutor in the ordinary branches of knowledge ; and in this capacity was regular, calm, and strict, not to say severe, in exacting from his pupil the attention necessary for his profiting. But in the perusal of history, to which their attention was frequently turned, as well as in the study of classic authors, there often occurred facts or sentiments which produced an instant effect upon Mertoun's mind, and brought on him suddenly what Swertha, Sweyn, and even Mordaunt, came to distinguish by

the name of his dark hour. He was aware, in the usual case, of its approach, and retreated to an inner apartment, into which he never permitted even Mordaunt to enter. Here he would abide in seclusion for days, and even weeks, only coming out at uncertain times, to take such food as they had taken care to leave within his reach, which he used in wonderfully small quantities. At other times, and especially during the winter solstice, when almost every person spends the gloomy time within doors in feasting and merriment, this unhappy man would wrap himself in a dark-coloured sea-cloak, and wander out along the stormy beach, or upon the desolate heath, indulging his own gloomy and wayward reveries under the inclement sky, the rather that he was then most sure to wander unencountered and unobserved.

As Mordaunt grew older, he learned to note the particular signs which preceded these fits of gloomy despondency, and to direct such precautions as might ensure his unfortunate parent from ill-timed interruption (which had always the effect of driving him to fury), while, at the same time, full provision was made for his subsistence. Mordaunt perceived that at such periods the melancholy fit of his father was greatly prolonged if he chanced to present himself to his eyes while the dark hour was upon him. Out of respect, therefore, to his parent, as well as to indulge the love of active exercise and of amusement natural to his period of life, Mordaunt used often to absent himself altogether from the mansion of Jarlshof, and even from the district, secure that his father, if the dark hour passed away in his absence, would be little inclined to inquire how his son had disposed of his leisure, so that he was sure he had not watched his own weak moments, that being the subject on which he entertained the utmost jealousy.

At such times, therefore, all the sources of amusement which the country afforded were open to the younger Mertoun, who, in these intervals of his education, had an opportunity to give full scope to the energies of a bold, active, and daring character. He was often engaged with the youth of the hamlet in those desperate sports to which the 'dreadful trade of the samphire-gatherer' is like a walk upon level ground — often joined those midnight excursions upon the face of the giddy cliffs, to secure the eggs or the young of the sea-fowl; and in these daring adventures displayed an address, presence of mind, and activity which, in one so young and not a native of the country, astonished the oldest fowlers.¹

¹ See Accidents to Fowlers. Note 4.

At other times, Mordaunt accompanied Sweyn and other fishermen in their long and perilous expeditions to the distant and deep sea, learning under their direction the management of the boat, in which they equal, or excel, perhaps, any natives of the British empire. This exercise had charms for Mordaunt independently of the fishing alone.

At this time, the old Norwegian sagas were much remembered, and often rehearsed, by the fishermen, who still preserved among themselves the ancient Norse tongue, which was the speech of their forefathers. In the dark romance of those Scandinavian tales lay much that was captivating to a youthful ear; and the classic fables of antiquity were rivalled at least, if not excelled, in Mordaunt's opinion by the strange legends of Berserkars, of sea-kings, of dwarfs, giants, and sorcerers, which he heard from the native Zetlanders. Often the scenes around him were assigned as the localities of wild poems, which, half-recited, half-chanted by voices as hoarse, if not so loud, as the waves over which they floated, pointed out the very bay on which they sailed as the scene of a bloody sea-fight; the scarce-seen heap of stones that bristled over the projecting cape as the dun, or castle, of some potent earl or noted pirate; the distant and solitary grey stone on the lonely moor as marking the grave of a hero; the wild cavern, up which the sea rolled in heavy, broad, and unbroken billows, as the dwelling of some noted sorceress.¹

The ocean also had its mysteries, the effect of which was aided by the dim twilight, through which it was imperfectly seen for more than half the year. Its bottomless depths and secret caves contained, according to the account of Sweyn and others skilled in legendary lore, such wonders as modern navigators reject with disdain. In the quiet moonlight bay, where the waves came rippling to the shore, upon a bed of smooth sand intermingled with shells, the mermaid was still seen to glide along the waters by moonlight, and mingling her voice with the sighing breeze, was often heard to sing of subterranean wonders, or to chant prophecies of future events. The Kraken, the hugest of living things, was still supposed to cumber the recesses of the Northern Ocean; and often, when some fog-bank covered the sea at a distance, the eye of the experienced boatman saw the horns of the monstrous leviathan welking and waving amidst the wreaths of mist, and bore away with all press of oar and sail, lest the sudden suction, occasioned by the sink-

¹ See Norse Fragments. Note 5.

ing of the monstrous mass to the bottom, should drag within the grasp of its multifarious feelers his own frail skiff. The sea snake was also known, which, arising out of the depths of ocean, stretches to the skies his enormous neck, covered with a mane like that of a war-horse, and with his broad, glittering eyes raised mast-head high, looks out, as it seems, for plunder or for victims.

Many prodigious stories of these marine monsters, and of many others less known, were then universally received among the Zetlanders, whose descendants have not as yet by any means abandoned faith in them.¹

Such legends are, indeed, everywhere current amongst the vulgar; but the imagination is far more powerfully affected by them on the deep and dangerous seas of the North, amidst precipices and headlands, many hundred feet in height; amid perilous straits, and currents, and eddies; long sunken reefs of rock, over which the vivid ocean foams and boils; dark caverns, to whose extremities neither man nor skiff has ever ventured; lonely, and often uninhabited, isles; and occasionally the ruins of ancient Northern fastnesses, dimly seen by the feeble light of the Arctic winter. To Mordaunt, who had much of romance in his disposition, these superstitions formed a pleasing and interesting exercise of the imagination, while, half-doubting, half-inclined to believe, he listened to the tales chanted concerning these wonders of nature and creatures of credulous belief, told in the rude but energetic language of the ancient Scalds.

But there wanted not softer and lighter amusement, that might seem better suited to Mordaunt's age than the wild tales and rude exercises which we have already mentioned. The season of winter, when, from the shortness of the daylight, labour becomes impossible, is in Zetland the time of revel, feasting, and merriment. Whatever the fisherman has been able to acquire during summer was expended, and often wasted, in maintaining the mirth and hospitality of his hearth during this period; while the landholders and gentlemen of the island gave double loose to their convivial and hospitable dispositions, thronged their houses with guests, and drove away the rigour of the season with jest, glee, and song, the dance, and the wine-cup.

Amid the revels of this merry, though rigorous, season no youth added more spirit to the dance or glee to the revel than

¹ See Sea Monsters. Note 6.

the young stranger, Mordaunt Mertoun. When his father's state of mind permitted, or indeed required, his absence, he wandered from house to house, a welcome guest wherever he came, and lent his willing voice to the song and his foot to the revel. A boat, or, if the weather, as was often the case, permitted not that convenience, one of the numerous ponies, which, straying in hordes about the extensive moors, may be said to be at any man's command who can catch them, conveyed him from the mansion of one hospitable Zetlander to that of another. None excelled him in performing the warlike sword-dance, a species of amusement which had been derived from the habits of the ancient Norsemen. He could play upon the 'gue,' and upon the common violin, the melancholy and pathetic tunes peculiar to the country; and with great spirit and execution could relieve their monotony with the livelier airs of the North of Scotland. When a party set forth as maskers, or, as they are called in Scotland, 'guizards,' to visit some neighbouring laird or rich udaller, it augured well of the expedition if Mordaunt Mertoun could be prevailed upon to undertake the office of 'skudler,' or leader of the band. Upon these occasions, full of fun and frolic, he led his retinue from house to house, bringing mirth where he went, and leaving regret when he departed. Mordaunt became thus generally known, and beloved as generally, through most of the houses composing the patriarchal community of the Main Isle; but his visits were most frequently and most willingly paid at the mansion of his father's landlord and protector, Magnus Troil.

It was not entirely the hearty and sincere welcome of the worthy old magnate, nor the sense that he was in effect his father's patron, which occasioned these frequent visits. The hand of welcome was indeed received as eagerly as it was sincerely given, while the ancient Udaller, raising himself in his huge chair, whereof the inside was lined with well-dressed sealskins, and the outside composed of massive oak, carved by the rude graving-tool of some Hamburgh carpenter, shouted forth his welcome in a tone which might, in ancient times, have hailed the return of Ioul, the highest festival of the Goths. There was metal yet more attractive, and younger hearts, whose welcome, if less loud, was as sincere as that of the jolly Udaller. But it is matter which ought not to be discussed at the conclusion of a chapter.

CHAPTER III

Oh, Bessy Bell and Mary Gray,
They were twa bonnie lasses ;
They bigged a house on yon burn-brae,
And theekit it ower wi' rashes.

Fair Bessy Bell I loosed yeastreen,
And thought I ne'er could alter ;
But Mary Gray's twa pawky een
Have garr'd my fancy falter.

Scots Song.

WE have already mentioned Minna and Brenda, the daughters of Magnus Troil. Their mother had been dead for many years, and they were now two beautiful girls, the eldest only eighteen, which might be a year or two younger than Mordaunt Mertoun, the second about seventeen. They were the joy of their father's heart and the light of his old eyes ; and although indulged to a degree which might have endangered his comfort and their own, they repaid his affection with a love into which even blind indulgence had not introduced slight regard or feminine caprice. The difference of their tempers and of their complexions was singularly striking, although combined, as is usual, with a certain degree of family resemblance.

The mother of these maidens had been a Scottish lady from the Highlands of Sutherland, the orphan of a noble chief, who, driven from his own country during the feuds of the 17th century, had found shelter in those peaceful islands, which, amidst poverty and seclusion, were thus far happy, that they remained unvexed by discord and unstained by civil broil. The father (his name was St. Clair) pined for his native glen, his feudal tower, his clansmen, and his fallen authority, and died not long after his arrival in Zetland. The beauty of his orphan daughter, despite her Scottish lineage, melted the stout heart of Magnus Troil. He sued and was listened to, and she became his bride ; but dying in the fifth year of their union, left him to mourn his brief period of domestic happiness.

From her mother, Minna inherited the stately form and dark eyes, the raven locks and finely-pencilled brows, which showed she was, on one side at least, a stranger to the blood of Thule. Her cheeks —

O call it fair, not pale !

was so slightly and delicately tinged with the rose that many thought the lily had an undue proportion in her complexion. But in that predominance of the paler flower there was nothing sickly or languid : it was the true, natural colour of health, and corresponded in a peculiar degree with features which seemed calculated to express a contemplative and high-minded character. When Minna Troil heard a tale of woe or of injustice, it was then her blood rushed to her cheeks, and showed plainly how warm it beat, notwithstanding the generally serious, composed, and retiring disposition which her countenance and demeanour seemed to exhibit. If strangers sometimes conceived that these fine features were clouded by melancholy, for which her age and situation could scarce have given occasion, they were soon satisfied, upon further acquaintance, that the placid, mild quietude of her disposition, and the mental energy of a character which was but little interested in ordinary and trivial occurrences, were the real cause of her gravity ; and most men, when they knew that her melancholy had no ground in real sorrow, and was only the aspiration of a soul bent on more important objects than those by which she was surrounded, might have wished her whatever could add to her happiness, but could scarce have desired that, graceful as she was in her natural and unaffected seriousness, she should change that deportment for one more gay. In short, notwithstanding our wish to have avoided that hackneyed simile of an angel, we cannot avoid saying there was something in the serious beauty of her aspect, in the measured yet graceful ease of her motions, in the music of her voice, and the serene purity of her eye, that seemed as if Minna Troil belonged naturally to some higher and better sphere, and was only the chance visitant of a world that was not worthy of her.

The scarcely less beautiful, equally lovely, and equally innocent Brenda was of a complexion as differing from her sister as they differed in character, taste, and expression. Her profuse locks were of that paly brown which receives from the passing sunbeam a tinge of gold, but darkens again when the ray has passed from it. Her eye, her mouth, the beautiful row

of teeth, which in her innocent vivacity were frequently disclosed; the fresh, yet not too bright, glow of a healthy complexion, tinging a skin like the drifted snow, spoke her genuine Scandinavian descent. A fairy form, less tall than that of Minna, but still more finely moulded into symmetry; a careless, and almost childish, lightness of step; an eye that seemed to look on every object with pleasure, from a natural and serene cheerfulness of disposition, attracted even more general admiration than the charms of her sister, though perhaps that which Minna did excite might be of a more intense as well as a more reverential character.

The dispositions of these lovely sisters were not less different than their complexions. In the kindly affections, neither could be said to excel the other, so much were they attached to their father and to each other. But the cheerfulness of Brenda mixed itself with the every-day business of life, and seemed inexhaustible in its profusion. The less buoyant spirit of her sister appeared to bring to society a contented wish to be interested and pleased with what was going forward, but was rather placidly carried along with the stream of mirth and pleasure than disposed to aid its progress by any efforts of her own. She endured mirth rather than enjoyed it; and the pleasures in which she most delighted were those of a graver and more solitary cast. The knowledge which is derived from books was beyond her reach. Zetland afforded few opportunities in those days of studying the lessons bequeathed

By dead men to their kind;

and Magnus Troil, such as we have described him, was not a person within whose mansion the means of such knowledge were to be acquired. But the book of nature was before Minna, that noblest of volumes, where we are ever called to wonder and to admire, even when we cannot understand. The plants of those wild regions, the shells on the shores, and the long list of feathered clans which haunt their cliffs and eyries, were as well known to Minna Troil as to the most experienced fowlers. Her powers of observation were wonderful, and little interrupted by other tones of feeling. The information which she acquired by habits of patient attention was indelibly riveted in a naturally powerful memory. She had also a high feeling for the solitary and melancholy grandeur of the scenes in which she was placed. The ocean, in all its varied forms of sublimity and terror; the tremendous cliffs, that resound to the ceaseless roar of the billows

and the clang of the sea-fowl, had for Minna a charm in almost every state in which the changing seasons exhibited them. With the enthusiastic feelings proper to the romantic race from which her mother descended, the love of natural objects was to her a passion capable not only of occupying, but at times of agitating, her mind. Scenes upon which her sister looked with a sense of transient awe or emotion, which vanished on her return from witnessing them, continued long to fill Minna's imagination, not only in solitude and in the silence of the night, but in the hours of society. So that sometimes when she sat like a beautiful statue, a present member of the domestic circle, her thoughts were far absent, wandering on the wild sea-shore, and among the yet wilder mountains of her native isles. And yet, when recalled to conversation, and mingling in it with interest, there were few to whom her friends were more indebted for enhancing its enjoyments; and although something in her manners claimed deference (notwithstanding her early youth) as well as affection, even her gay, lovely, and amiable sister was not more generally beloved than the more retired and pensive Minna.

Indeed, the two lovely sisters were not only the delight of their friends, but the pride of those islands, where the inhabitants of a certain rank were blended, by the remoteness of their situation and the general hospitality of their habits, into one friendly community. A wandering poet and parcel-musician, who, after going through various fortunes, had returned to end his days as he could in his native islands, had celebrated the daughters of Magnus in a poem, which he entitled 'Night and Day'; and in his description of Minna might almost be thought to have anticipated, though only in a rude outline, the exquisite lines of Lord Byron, —

She walks in beauty, like the night
Of cloudless climes and starry skies;
And all that's best of dark and bright
Meet in her aspect and her eyes:
Thus mellow'd to that tender light
Which heaven to gaudy day denies.

Their father loved the maidens both so well that it might be difficult to say which he loved best; saving that, perchance, he liked his graver damsel better in the walk without doors, and his merry maiden better by the fireside; that he more desired the society of Minna when he was sad, and that of Brenda when he was mirthful; and, what was nearly the same thing,

preferred Minna before noon, and Brenda after the glass had circulated in the evening.

But it was still more extraordinary that the affections of Mordaunt Mertoun seemed to hover with the same impartiality as those of their father betwixt the two lovely sisters. From his boyhood, as we have noticed, he had been a frequent inmate of the residence of Magnus at Burgh-Westra, although it lay nearly twenty miles distant from Jarlishof. The impassable character of the country betwixt these places, extending over hills covered with loose and quaking bog, and frequently intersected by the creeks or arms of the sea, which indent the island on either side, as well as by fresh-water streams and lakes, rendered the journey difficult, and even dangerous, in the dark season; yet, as soon as the state of his father's mind warned him to absent himself, Mordaunt, at every risk and under every difficulty, was pretty sure to be found the next day at Burgh-Westra, having achieved his journey in less time than would have been employed perhaps by the most active native.

He was, of course, set down as a wooer of one of the daughters of Magnus by the public of Zetland; and when the old Udaller's great partiality to the youth was considered, nobody doubted that he might aspire to the hand of either of those distinguished beauties, with as large a share of islets, rocky moorland, and shore fishings as might be the fitting portion of a favoured child, and with the presumptive prospect of possessing half the domains of the ancient house of Troil, when their present owner should be no more. This seemed all a reasonable speculation, and, in theory at least, better constructed than many that are current through the world as unquestionable facts. But, alas! all that sharpness of observation which could be applied to the conduct of the parties failed to determine the main point, to which of the young persons, namely, the attentions of Mordaunt were peculiarly devoted. He seemed, in general, to treat them as an affectionate and attached brother might have treated two sisters, so equally dear to him that a breath would have turned the scale of affection. Or if at any time, which often happened, the one maiden appeared the more especial object of his attention, it seemed only to be because circumstances called her peculiar talents and disposition into more particular and immediate exercise.

Both the sisters were accomplished in the simple music of the North, and Mordaunt, who was their assistant, and some-

times their preceptor, when they were practising this delightful art, might be now seen assisting Minna in the acquisition of those wild, solemn, and simple airs to which Scalds and harpers sung of old the deeds of heroes, and presently found equally active in teaching Brenda the more lively and complicated music which their father's affection caused to be brought from the English or Scottish capital for the use of his daughters. And while conversing with them, Mordaunt, who mingled a strain of deep and ardent enthusiasm with the gay and ungovernable spirits of youth, was equally ready to enter into the wild and poetical visions of Minna or into the lively and often humorous chat of her gayer sister. In short, so little did he seem to attach himself to either damsel exclusively, that he was sometimes heard to say that Minna never looked so lovely as when her light-hearted sister had induced her, for the time, to forget her habitual gravity ; or Brenda so interesting as when she sat listening, a subdued and affected partaker of the deep pathos of her sister Minna.

The public of the Mainland were, therefore, to use the hunter's phrase, at fault in their farther conclusions, and could but determine, after long vacillating betwixt the maidens, that the young man was positively to marry one of them, but which of the two could only be determined when his approaching manhood, or the interference of stout old Magnus, the father, should teach Master Mordaunt Mertoun to know his own mind. 'It was a pretty thing indeed,' they usually concluded, 'that he, no native born, and possessed of no visible means of subsistence that is known to any one, should presume to hesitate, or affect to have the power of selection and choice, betwixt the two most distinguished beauties of Zetland. If they were Magnus Troil, they would soon be at the bottom of the matter,' and so forth ; all which remarks were only whispered, for the hasty disposition of the Udaller had too much of the old Norse fire about it to render it safe for any one to become an unauthorised intermeddler with his family affairs. And thus stood the relation of Mordaunt Mertoun to the family of Mr. Troil of Burgh-Westra when the following incidents took place.

CHAPTER IV

This is no pilgrim's morning : yon grey mist
Lies upon hill, and dale, and field, and forest,
Like the dun wimple of a new-made widow ;
And, by my faith, although my heart be soft,
I'd rather hear that widow weep and sigh,
And tell the virtues of the dear departed,
Than, when the tempest sends his voice abroad,
Be subject to its fury.

The Double Nuptials.

THE spring was far advanced when, after a week spent in sport and festivity at Burgh-Westra, Mordaunt Mertoun bade adieu to the family, pleading the necessity of his return to Jarlshof. The proposal was combated by the maidens, and more decidedly by Magnus himself : he saw no occasion whatever for Mordaunt returning to Jarlshof. If his father desired to see him, which, by the way, Magnus did not believe, Mr. Mertoun had only to throw himself into the stern of Sweyn's boat, or betake himself to a pony, if he liked a land journey better, and he would see not only his son, but twenty folk besides, who would be most happy to find that he had not lost the use of his tongue entirely during his long solitude, 'Although I must own,' added the worthy Udaller, 'that, when he lived among us, nobody ever made less use of it.'

Mordaunt acquiesced both in what respected his father's taciturnity and his dislike to general society ; but suggested, at the same time, that the first circumstance rendered his own immediate return more necessary, as he was the usual channel of communication betwixt his father and others ; and that the second corroborated the same necessity, since Mr. Mertoun's having no other society whatever seemed a weighty reason why his son's should be restored to him without loss of time. As to his father's coming to Burgh-Westra, 'They might as well,' he said, 'expect to see Sumburgh Cape come thither.'

'And that would be a cumbrous guest,' said Magnus. 'But

you will stop for our dinner to-day? There are the families of Muness, Quendale, Thorshivoe, and I know not who else, are expected; and, besides the thirty that were in house this blessed night, we shall have as many more as chamber and bower, and barn and boat-house, can furnish with beds or with barley-straw; and you will leave all this behind you!

'And the blithe dance at night,' added Brenda, in a tone betwixt reproach and vexation; 'and the young men from the Isle of Paba that are to dance the sword-dance, whom shall we find to match them, for the honour of the Main?'

'There is many a merry dancer on the Mainland, Brenda,' replied Mordaunt, 'even if I should never rise on tiptoe again. And where good dancers are found, Brenda Troil will always find the best partner. I must trip it to-night through the wastes of Dunrossness.'

'Do not say so, Mordaunt,' said Minna, who, during this conversation, had been looking from the window something anxiously; 'go not, to-day at least, through the wastes of Dunrossness.'

'And why not to-day, Minna,' said Mordaunt, laughing, 'any more than to-morrow?'

'Oh, the morning mist lies heavy upon yonder chain of isles, nor has it permitted us since daybreak even a single glimpse of Fitful Head, the lofty cape that concludes yon splendid range of mountains. The fowl are winging their way to the shore, and the sheldrake seems, through the mist, as large as the scart.¹ See, the very sheerwaters and bonxies are making to the cliffs for shelter.'

'And they will ride out a gale against a king's frigate,' said her father: 'there is foul weather when they cut and run.'

'Stay, then, with us,' said Minna to her friend; 'the storm will be dreadful, yet it will be grand to see it from Burgh-Westra, if we have no friend exposed to its fury. See, the air is close and sultry, though the season is yet so early, and the day so calm that not a windlestraw moves on the heath. Stay with us, Mordaunt; the storm which these signs announce will be a dreadful one.'

'I must be gone the sooner,' was the conclusion of Mordaunt, who could not deny the signs, which had not escaped his own quick observation. 'If the storm be too fierce, I will abide for the night at Stourburgh.'

'What!' said Magnus; 'will you leave us for the new

¹ See Note 7.

chamberlain's new Scotch tacksmen, who is to teach all us Zetland savages new ways? Take your own gate, my lad, if that is the song you sing.'

'Nay,' said Mordaunt; 'I had only some curiosity to see the new implements he has brought.'

'Ay — ay, ferlies make fools fain. I would like to know if his new plough will bear against a Zetland rock?' answered Magnus.

'I must not pass Stourburgh on the journey,' said the youth, deferring to his patron's prejudice against innovation, 'if this boding weather bring on tempest; but if it only break in rain, as is most probable, I am not likely to be melted in the wetting.'

'It will not soften into rain alone,' said Minna; 'see how much heavier the clouds fall every moment, and see these weather-gaws that streak the lead-coloured mass with partial gleams of faded red and purple.'

'I see them all,' said Mordaunt; 'but they only tell me I have no time to tarry here. Adieu, Minna; I will send you the eagle's feathers, if an eagle can be found on Fair Isle or Foulah. And fare thee well, my pretty Brenda, and keep a thought for me, should the Paba men dance ever so well.'

'Take care of yourself, since go you will,' said both sisters together.

Old Magnus scolded them formally for supposing there was any danger to an active young fellow from a spring gale, whether by sea or land; yet ended by giving his own caution also to Mordaunt, advising him seriously to delay his journey, or at least to stop at Stourburgh. 'For,' said he, 'second thoughts are best; and as this Scottishman's howf lies right under your lee, why, take any port in a storm. But do not be assured to find the door on latch, let the storm blow ever so hard; there are such matters as bolts and bars in Scotland, though, thanks to St. Roland, they are unknown here, save the great lock on the old Castle of Scalloway, that all men run to see; maybe they make part of this man's improvements. But go, Mordaunt, since go you will. You should drink a stirrup-cup now, were you three years older; but boys should never drink, excepting after dinner. I will drink it for you, that good customs may not be broken, or bad luck come of it. Here is your bonally, my lad.' And so saying, he quaffed a rummer glass of brandy with as much impunity as if it had been spring-water.

Thus regretted and cautioned on all hands, Mordaunt took leave of the hospitable household, and looking back at the comforts with which it was surrounded, and the dense smoke that rolled upwards from its chimneys, he first recollected the guestless and solitary desolation of Jarlishof, then compared with the sullen and moody melancholy of his father's temper the warm kindness of those whom he was leaving, and could not refrain from a sigh at the thoughts which forced themselves on his imagination.

The signs of the tempest did not dishonour the predictions of Minna. Mordaunt had not advanced three hours on his journey before the wind, which had been so deadly still in the morning, began at first to wail and sigh, as if bemoaning beforehand the evils which it might perpetrate in its fury, like a madman in the gloomy state of dejection which precedes his fit of violence; then gradually increasing, the gale howled, raged, and roared with the full fury of a northern storm. It was accompanied by showers of rain mixed with hail, that dashed with the most unrelenting rage against the hills and rocks with which the traveller was surrounded, distracting his attention, in spite of his utmost exertions, and rendering it very difficult for him to keep the direction of his journey in a country where there is neither road nor even the slightest track to direct the steps of the wanderer, and where he is often interrupted by brooks as well as large pools of water, lakes, and lagoons. All these inland waters were now lashed into sheets of tumbling foam, much of which, carried off by the fury of the whirlwind, was mingled with the gale, and transported far from the waves of which it had lately made a part; while the salt relish of the drift which was pelted against his face showed Mordaunt that the spray of the more distant ocean, disturbed to frenzy by the storm, was mingled with that of the inland lakes and streams.

Amidst this hideous combustion of the elements, Mordaunt Mertoun struggled forward as one to whom such elemental war was familiar, and who regarded the exertions which it required to withstand its fury but as a mark of resolution and manhood. He felt even, as happens usually to those who endure great hardships, that the exertion necessary to subdue them is in itself a kind of elevating triumph. To see and distinguish his path when the cattle were driven from the hill, and the very fowls from the firmament, was but the stronger proof of his own superiority. 'They shall not hear of me at Burgh-Westra,' said he to himself, 'as they heard of old doited Ringan Ewenson's

boat, that foundered betwixt roadstead and key. I am more of a cragsman than to mind fire or water, wave by sea, or quagmire by land.' Thus he struggled on, buffeting with the storm, supplying the want of the usual signs by which travellers directed their progress (for rock, mountain, and headland were shrouded in mist and darkness) by the instinctive sagacity with which long acquaintance with these wilds had taught him to mark every minute object which could serve in such circumstances to regulate his course. Thus, we repeat, he struggled onward, occasionally standing still, or even lying down, when the gust was most impetuous; making way against it when it was somewhat lulled, by a rapid and bold advance even in its very current; or, when this was impossible, by a movement resembling that of a vessel working to windward by short tacks, but never yielding one inch of the way which he had fought so hard to gain.

Yet, notwithstanding Mordaunt's experience and resolution, his situation was sufficiently uncomfortable, and even precarious; not because his sailor's jacket and trowsers, the common dress of young men through these isles when on a journey, were thoroughly wet, for that might have taken place within the same brief time in any ordinary day in this watery climate; but the real danger was that, notwithstanding his utmost exertions, he made very slow way through brooks that were sending their waters all abroad, through morasses drowned in double deluges of moisture, which rendered all the ordinary passes more than usually dangerous, and repeatedly obliged the traveller to perform a considerable circuit, which in the usual case was unnecessary. Thus repeatedly baffled, notwithstanding his youth and strength, Mordaunt, after maintaining a dogged conflict with wind, rain, and the fatigue of a prolonged journey, was truly happy when, not without having been more than once mistaken in his road, he at length found himself within sight of the house of Stourburgh, or Harfra; for the names were indifferently given to the residence of Mr. Triptolemus Yellowley, who was the chosen missionary of the chamberlain of Orkney and Zetland, a speculative person, who designed, through the medium of Triptolemus, to introduce into the Ultima Thule of the Romans a spirit of improvement which at that early period was scarce known to exist in Scotland itself.

At length, and with much difficulty, Mordaunt reached the house of this worthy agriculturist, the only refuge from the relentless storm which he could hope to meet with for several miles; and going straight to the door, with the most undoubt-

ing confidence of instant admission, he was not a little surprised to find it not merely latched, which the weather might excuse, but even bolted, a thing which, as Magnus Troil has already intimated, was almost unknown in the archipelago. To knock, to call, and finally to batter the door with staff and stones, were the natural resources of the youth, who was rendered alike impatient by the pelting of the storm and by encountering such most unexpected and unusual obstacles to instant admission. As he was suffered, however, for many minutes to exhaust his impatience in noise and clamour, without receiving any reply, we will employ them in informing the reader who Triptolemus Yellowley was, and how he came by a name so singular.

Old Jasper Yellowley, the father of Triptolemus, though born at the foot of Roseberry Topping, had been 'come over' by a certain noble Scottish earl, who, proving too far north for canny Yorkshire, had persuaded him to accept of a farm in the Mearns, where, it is unnecessary to add, he found matters very different from what he had expected. It was in vain that the stout farmer set manfully to work to counterbalance, by superior skill, the inconveniences arising from a cold soil and a weeping climate. These might have been probably overcome; but his neighbourhood to the Grampians exposed him eternally to that species of visitation from the plaided gentry who dwelt within their skirts which made young Norval a warrior and a hero, but only converted Jasper Yellowley into a poor man. This was, indeed, balanced in some sort by the impression which his ruddy cheek and robust form had the fortune to make upon Miss Barbara Clinkscale, daughter to the umquhile, and sister to the then existing, Clinkscale of that ilk.

This was thought a horrid and unnatural union in the neighbourhood, considering that the house of Clinkscale had at least as great a share of Scottish pride as of Scottish parsimony, and was amply endowed with both. But Miss Baby had her handsome fortune of two thousand marks at her own disposal, was a woman of spirit, who had been *major* and *sui juris* (as the writer who drew the contract assured her) for full twenty years; so she set consequences and commentaries alike at defiance, and wedded the hearty Yorkshire yeoman. Her brother and her more wealthy kinsmen drew off in disgust, and almost disowned their degraded relative. But the house of Clinkscale was allied, like every other family in Scotland at the time, to a set of relations who were not so nice — tenth and sixteenth cousins, who not only acknowledged their kinswoman

Baby after her marriage with Yellowley, but even condescended to eat beans and bacon¹ — though the latter was then the abomination of the Scotch as much as of the Jews — with her husband, and would willingly have cemented the friendship by borrowing a little cash from him, had not his good lady, who understood trap as well as any woman in the Mearns, put a negative on this advance to intimacy. Indeed, she knew how to make young Deilbelicket, old Dougald Baresword, the Laird of Bandy-brawl, and others pay for the hospitality which she did not think proper to deny them, by rendering them useful in her negotiations with the light-handed lads beyond the Cairn, who, finding their late object of plunder was now allied to 'kend folks, and owned by them at kirk and market,' became satisfied, on a moderate yearly composition, to desist from their depredations.

This eminent success reconciled Jasper to the dominion which his wife began to assume over him; and which was much confirmed by her proving to be — let me see, what is the prettiest mode of expressing it? — in the family way. On this occasion, Mrs. Yellowley had a remarkable dream, as is the usual practice of teeming mothers previous to the birth of an illustrious offspring. She 'was a-dreamed,' as her husband expressed it, that she was safely delivered of a plough, drawn by three yoke of Angus-shire oxen; and being a mighty investigator into such portents, she sat herself down with her gossips to consider what the thing might mean. Honest Jasper ventured, with much hesitation, to intimate his own opinion that the vision had reference rather to things past than things future, and might have been occasioned by his wife's nerves having been a little startled by meeting in the loan above the house his own great plough with the six oxen, which were the pride of his heart. But the good cummers² raised such a hue and cry against this exposition, that Jasper was fain to put his fingers in his ears and to run out of the apartment.

'Hear to him,' said an old Whigamore carline — 'hear to him, wi' his owsen, that are as an idol to him, even as the calf of Bethel! Na — na, it's nae pleugh of the flesh that the bonny lad-bairn — for a lad it sall be — sall e'er striddle between the stilts o'; it's the pleugh of the Spirit; and I trust mysell to see him wag the head o' him in a pu'pit; or, what's better, on a hillside.'

'Now, the deil's in your Whiggery,' said the old Lady Glenprosing; 'wad ye hae our cummer's bonny lad-bairn wag the

¹ [See *Waverley*, Note 22, p. 476.]

² i. e. gossips.

head aff his shouthers like your godly Mess James Guthrie,¹ that ye hald such a clavering about? Na — na, he sall walk a mair siccar path, and be a dainty curate; and say he should live to be a bishop, what the waur wad he be?

The gauntlet thus fairly flung down by one sibyl was caught up by another, and the controversy between Presbytery and Episcopacy raged, roared, or rather screamed, a round of cinnamon-water serving only like oil to the flame, till Jasper entered with the plough-staff; and by the awe of his presence, and the shame of misbehaving 'before the stranger man,' imposed some conditions of silence upon the disputants.

I do not know whether it was impatience to give to the light a being destined to such high and doubtful fates, or whether poor Dame Yellowley was rather frightened at the hurly-burly which had taken place in her presence, but she was taken suddenly ill; and, contrary to the formula in such cases used and provided, was soon reported to be 'a good deal worse than was to be expected.' She took the opportunity, having still all her wits about her, to extract from her sympathetic husband two promises — first, that he would christen the child, whose birth was like to cost her so dear, by a name indicative of the vision with which she had been favoured; and next, that he would educate him for the ministry. The canny Yorkshireman, thinking she had a good title at present to dictate in such matters, subscribed to all she required. A man-child was accordingly born under these conditions, but the state of the mother did not permit her for many days to inquire how far they had been complied with. When she was in some degree convalescent, she was informed that, as it was thought fit the child should be immediately christened, it had received the name of Triptolemus; the curate, who was a man of some classical skill, conceiving that this epithet contained a handsome and classical allusion to the visionary plough, with its triple yoke of oxen. Mrs. Yellowley was not much delighted with the manner in which her request had been complied with: but grumbling being to as little purpose as in the celebrated case of Tristram Shandy, she e'en sat down contented with the heathenish name, and endeavoured to counteract the effects it might produce upon the taste and feelings of the nominee by such an education as might put him above the slightest thought

¹ Mr. James Guthrie, minister of Stirling, and author of the *Causes of the Lord's Wrath*, 1653, was executed at Edinburgh in 1661, and his head affixed on the Netherbow Port or Gate (*Laing*).

of socks, coulter, stilt, mould-board, or anything connected with the servile drudgery of the plough.

Jasper, sage Yorkshireman, smiled slyly in his sleeve, conceiving that young Trippie was likely to prove a chip of the old block, and would rather take after the jolly Yorkshire yeoman than the gentle but somewhat *aiare* blood of the house of Clinkscale. He remarked, with suppressed glee, that the tune which best answered the purpose of a lullaby was the 'Ploughman's Whistle,' and the first words the infant learned to stammer were the names of the oxen; moreover, that the 'bern' preferred home-brewed ale to Scotch twopenny, and never quitted hold of the tankard with so much reluctance as when there had been, by some manœuvre of Jasper's own device, a double 'straik' of malt allowed to the brewing, above that which was sanctioned by the most liberal recipe of which his dame's household thrift admitted. Besides this, when no other means could be fallen upon to divert an occasional fit of squalling, his father observed that Trip could be always silenced by jingling a bridle at his ear. From all which symptoms he used to swear in private that the boy would prove true Yorkshire, and mother and mother's kin would have small share of him.

Meanwhile, and within a year after the birth of Triptolemus, Mrs. Yellowley bore a daughter, named after herself, Barbara, who, even in earliest infancy, exhibited the pinched nose and thin lips by which the Clinkscale family were distinguished amongst the inhabitants of the Mearns; and as her childhood advanced, the readiness with which she seized, and the tenacity wherewith she detained, the playthings of Triptolemus, besides a desire to bite, pinch, and scratch, on slight or no provocation, were all considered by attentive observers as proofs that the Baby would prove 'her mother over again.' Malicious people did not stick to say, that the acrimony of the Clinkscale blood had not on this occasion been cooled and sweetened by that of Old England; that young Deilbelicket was much about the house, and they could not but think it odd that Mrs. Yellowley, who, as the whole world knew, gave nothing for nothing, should be so uncommonly attentive to heap the trencher and to fill the caup of an idle blackguard ne'er-do-weel. But when folk had once looked upon the austere and awfully virtuous countenance of Mrs. Yellowley, they did full justice to her propriety of conduct and Deilbelicket's delicacy of taste.

Meantime, young Triptolemus, having received such instruc-

tions as the curate could give him (for, though Dame Yellowley adhered to the persecuted remnant, her jolly husband, edified by the black gown and prayer-book, still conformed to the church as by law established), was, in due process of time, sent to St. Andrews to prosecute his studies. He went, it is true, but with an eye turned back with sad remembrances on his father's plough, his father's pancakes, and his father's ale, for which the small-beer of the college, commonly there termed 'thorough-go-nimble,' furnished a poor substitute. Yet he advanced in his learning, being found, however, to show a particular favour to such authors of antiquity as had made the improvement of the soil the object of their researches. He endured the *Bucolics* of Virgil; the *Georgics* he had by heart; but the *Aeneid* he could not away with; and he was particularly severe upon the celebrated line expressing a charge of cavalry, because, as he understood the word *putrem*,¹ he opined that the combatants, in their inconsiderate ardour, galloped over a new-manured ploughed field. Cato, the Roman Censor, was his favourite among classical heroes and philosophers, not on account of the strictness of his morals, but because of his treatise, *De Re Rustica*. He had ever in his mouth the phrase of Cicero, *Jam neminem antepones Catoni*. He thought well of Palladius and of Terentius Varro; but Columella was his pocket-companion. To these ancient worthies he added the more modern Tusser, Hartlib, and other writers on rural economies, not forgetting the lucubrations of the *Shepherd of Salisbury Plain*, and such of the better-informed philomaths who, instead of loading their almanacs with vain predictions of political events, pretended to see what seeds would grow and what would not, and direct the attention of their readers to that course of cultivation from which the production of good crops may be safely predicted; modest sages, in fine, who, careless of the rise and downfall of empires, content themselves with pointing out the fit seasons to reap and sow, with a fair guess at the weather which each month will be likely to present; as, for example, that, if Heaven pleases, we shall have snow in January, and the author will stake his reputation that July proves, on the whole, a month of sunshine. Now, although the rector of St. Leonard's was greatly pleased in general with the quiet, laborious and studious bent of Triptolemus Yellowley, and deemed him, in so far, worthy of a name of four syllables having a Latin termination, yet he relished not, by

¹ *Quadrupedumque putrem sonitu quatit ungula campum.*

any means, his exclusive attention to his favourite authors. It savoured of the earth, he said, if not of something worse, to have a man's mind always grovelling in mould, stercorated or unstercorated; and he pointed out, but in vain, history, and poetry, and divinity as more elevating subjects of occupation. Triptolemus Yellowley was obstinate in his own course. Of the battle of Pharsalia, he thought not as it affected the freedom of the world, but dwelt on the rich crop which the Emathian fields were likely to produce he next season. In vernacular poetry, Triptolemus could scarce be prevailed upon to read a single couplet, excepting old Tusser, as aforesaid, whose *Hundred Points of Good Husbandry* he had got by heart; and excepting also *Piers Plowman's Vision*, which, charmed with the title, he bought with avidity from a backman, but, after reading the first two parts, deemed it to burn like fire as an impudent and misnamed political libel. On the subject of divinity, he summed that matter up by reminding his hearers that to labour the earth and win his bread with the toil of his body and sweat of his brow was the lot imposed upon every man; and, for his part, he was resolved to discharge, to the best of his abilities, a task so obviously necessary to existence, leaving others to speculate as much as they would upon the more recondite mysteries of theology.

With a spirit so much narrowed and limited to the concerns of rural life, it may be doubted whether the proficiency of Triptolemus in learning, or the use he was like to make of his acquisitions, would have much gratified the ambitious hope of his affectionate mother. It is true, he expressed no reluctance to embrace the profession of a clergyman, which suited well enough with the habitual personal indolence which sometimes attaches to speculative dispositions. He had views, to speak plainly (I wish they were peculiar to himself), of cultivating the glebe six days in the week, preaching on the seventh with due regularity, and dining with some fat franklin or country lord, with whom he could smoke a pipe and drink a tankard after dinner, and mix in secret conference on the exhaustless subject,

Quid faciat lætas segetes.

Now this plan, besides that it indicated nothing of what was then called the root of the matter, implied necessarily the possession of a manse; and the possession of a manse inferred compliance with the doctrines of prelacy and other enormities

of the time. There was some question how far manse and glebe, stipend, both victual and money, might have out-balanced the good lady's predisposition towards Presbytery; but her zeal was not put to so severe a trial. She died before her son had completed his studies, leaving her afflicted spouse just as disconsolate as was to be expected. The first act of old Jasper's undivided administration was to recall his son from St. Andrews, in order to obtain his assistance in his domestic labours. And here it might have been supposed that our Triptolemus, summoned to carry into practice what he had so fondly studied in theory, must have been, to use a simile which *he* would have thought lively, like a cow entering upon a clover park. Alas, mistaken thoughts and deceitful hopes of mankind!

A laughing philosopher, the Democritus of our day, once, in a moral lecture, compared human life to a table pierced with a number of holes, each of which has a pin made exactly to fit it, but which pins being stuck in hastily, and without selection, chance leads inevitably to the most awkward mistakes. 'For how often do we see,' the orator pathetically concluded — 'how often, I say, do we see the round man stuck into the three-cornered hole?' This new illustration of the vagaries of fortune set every one present into convulsions of laughter, excepting one fat alderman, who seemed to make the case his own, and insisted that it was no jesting matter. To take up the simile, however, which is an excellent one, it is plain that Triptolemus Yellowley had been shaken out of the bag at least a hundred years too soon. If he had come on the stage in our own time, that is, if he had flourished at any time within these thirty or forty years, he could not have missed to have held the office of vice-president of some eminent agricultural society, and to have transacted all the business thereof under the auspices of some noble duke or lord, who, as the matter might happen, either knew, or did not know, the difference betwixt a horse and a cart and a cart-horse. He could not have missed such preferment, for he was exceedingly learned in all those particulars which, being of no consequence in actual practice, go, of course, a great way to constitute the character of a connoisseur in any art, and especially in agriculture. But, alas! Triptolemus Yellowley had, as we already have hinted, come into the world at least a century too soon: for, instead of sitting in an arm-chair, with a hammer in his hand and a bumper of port before him, giving forth the toast — 'To breeding, in all its branches,' his father planted him betwixt the

stilts of a plough, and invited him to guide the oxen, on whose beauties he would, in our day, have descanted, and whose rumps he would not have goaded, but have carved. Old Jasper complained that although no one talked so well of common and several, wheat and rape, fallow and lea, as his learned son (whom he always called Tolemus), yet, 'dang it,' added the Seneca, 'nought thrives wi' un — nought thrives wi' un!' It was still worse when Jasper, becoming frail and ancient, was obliged, as happened in the course of a few years, gradually to yield up the reins of government to the academical neophyte.

As if nature had meant him a spite, he had got one of the dourest and most intractable farms in the Mearns to try conclusions withal, a place which seemed to yield everything but what the agriculturist wanted; for there were plenty of thistles, which indicates dry land; and store of fern, which is said to intimate deep land; and nettles, which show where lime hath been applied; and deep furrows in the most unlikely spots, which intimated that it had been cultivated in former days by the Peghts, as popular tradition bore. There was also enough of stones to keep the ground warm, according to the creed of some farmers, and great abundance of springs to render it cool and sappy, according to the theory of others. It was in vain that, acting alternately on these opinions, poor Triptolemus endeavoured to avail himself of the supposed capabilities of the soil. No kind of butter that might be churned could be made to stick upon his own bread, any more than on that of poor Tusser, whose *Hundred Points of Good Husbandry*, so useful to others of his day, were never to himself worth as many pennies.¹

In fact, excepting an hundred acres of infield, to which old Jasper had early seen the necessity of limiting his labours, there was not a corner of the farm fit for anything but to break plough-graith and kill cattle. And then, as for the part which was really tilled with some profit, the expense of the farming establishment of Triptolemus, and his disposition to experiment, soon got rid of any good arising from the cultivation of it. 'The carles and the cart-avers,' he confessed, with a sigh, speaking of his farm-servants and horses, 'make it all, and the carles and cart-avers eat it all' — a conclusion which might sum up the year-book of many a gentleman farmer.

Matters would have soon been brought to a close with

¹ See Tusser's Poverty. Note 8.

Triptolemus in the present day. He would have got a bank-credit, manœuvred with wind-bills, dashed out upon a large scale, and soon have seen his crop and stock sequestered by the sheriff; but in those days a man could not ruin himself so easily. The whole Scottish tenantry stood upon the same level flat of poverty, so that it was extremely difficult to find any vantage ground by climbing up to which a man might have an opportunity of actually breaking his neck with some *éclat*. They were pretty much in the situation of people who, being totally without credit, may indeed suffer from indigence, but cannot possibly become bankrupt. Besides, notwithstanding the failure of Triptolemus's projects, there was to be balanced against the expenditure which they occasioned all the savings which the extreme economy of his sister Barbara could effect; and in truth her exertions were wonderful. She might have realised, if any one could, the idea of the learned philosopher, who pronounced that sleeping was a fancy, and eating but a habit, and who appeared to the world to have renounced both, until it was unhappily discovered that he had an intrigue with the cook-maid of the family, who indemnified him for his privations by giving him private entrée to the pantry and to a share of her own couch. But no such deceptions were practised by Barbara Yellowley. She was up early and down late, and seemed, to her over-watched and over-tasked maidens, to be as 'wakerife' as the cat herself. Then, for eating, it appeared that the air was a banquet to her, and she would have made it so to her retinue. Her brother, who, besides being lazy in his person, was somewhat luxurious in his appetite, would willingly now and then have tasted a mouthful of animal food, were it but to know how his sheep were fed off. But a proposal to eat a child could not have startled Mistress Barbara more; and, being of a compliant and easy disposition, Triptolemus reconciled himself to the necessity of a perpetual Lent, too happy when he could get a scrap of butter to his oaken cake, or (as they lived on the banks of the Esk) escape the daily necessity of eating salmon, whether in or out of season, six days out of the seven.

But although Mrs. Barbara brought faithfully to the joint stock all savings which her awful powers of economy accomplished to scrape together, and although the dower of their mother was by degrees expended, or nearly so, in aiding them upon extreme occasions, the term at length approached when it seemed impossible that they could sustain the conflict any

longer against the evil star of Triptolemus, as he called it himself, or the natural result of his absurd speculations, as it was termed by others. Luckily, at this sad crisis, a god jumped down to their relief out of a machine. In plain English, the noble lord who owned their farm arrived at his mansion-house in their neighbourhood, with his coach and six and his running footmen,¹ in the full splendour of the 17th century.

This person of quality was the son of the nobleman who had brought the ancient Jasper into the country from Yorkshire, and he was, like his father, a fanciful and scheming man.² He had schemed well for himself, however, amid the mutations of the time, having obtained, for a certain period of years, the administration of the remote islands of Orkney and Zetland, for payment of a certain rent, with the right of making the most of whatever was the property or revenue of the crown in these districts, under the title of Lord Chamberlain. Now, his lordship had become possessed with a notion, in itself a very true one, that much might be done to render this grant available, by improving the culture of the crown lands, both in Orkney and Zetland; and then having some acquaintance with our friend Triptolemus, he thought (rather less happily) that he might prove a person capable of furthering his schemes. He sent for him to the great hall-house, and was so much edified by the way in which our friend laid down the law upon every given subject relating to rural economy that he lost no time in securing the co-operation of so valuable an assistant, the first step being to release him from his present unprofitable farm.

The terms were arranged much to the mind of Triptolemus, who had already been taught, by many years' experience, a dark sort of notion that, without undervaluing or doubting for a moment his own skill, it would be quite as well that almost all the trouble and risk should be at the expense of his employer. Indeed, the hopes of advantage which he held out to his patron were so considerable, that the Lord Chamberlain dropped every idea of admitting his dependant into any share of the expected profits; for, rude as the arts of agriculture were in Scotland, they were far superior to those known and practised in the regions of Thule, and Triptolemus Yellowley conceived himself to be possessed of a degree of insight into these mysteries far superior to what was possessed or practised even in the Mearns.

¹ [See *Bride of Lammermoor*, Note 9, p. 318.]

² See Administration of Zetland. Note 9.

The improvement, therefore, which was to be expected would bear a double proportion, and the Lord Chamberlain was to reap all the profit, deducting a handsome salary for his steward Yellowley, together with the accommodation of a house and domestic farm, for the support of his family. Joy seized the heart of Mistress Barbara at hearing this happy termination of what threatened to be so very bad an affair as the lease of Cauldaces.

'If we cannot,' she said 'provide for our own house when all is coming in and nothing going out, surely we must be worse than infidels!'

Triptolemus was a busy man for some time, huffing and puffing, and eating and drinking in every change-house, while he ordered and collected together proper implements of agriculture, to be used by the natives of these devoted islands whose destinies were menaced with this formidable change. Singular tools these would seem if presented before a modern agricultural society; but everything is relative, nor could the heavy cart-load of timber, called the old Scots plough, seem less strange to a Scottish farmer of this present day than the corslets and casques of the soldiers of Cortes might seem to a regiment of our own army. Yet the latter conquered Mexico, and undoubtedly the former would have been a splendid improvement on the state of agriculture in Thule.

We have never been able to learn why Triptolemus preferred fixing his residence in Zetland to becoming an inhabitant of the Orkneys. Perhaps he thought the inhabitants of the latter archipelago the more simple and docile of the two kindred tribes; or perhaps he preferred the situation of the house and farm he himself was to occupy (which was indeed a tolerable one) as preferable to that which he had it in his power to have obtained upon Pomona (so the main island of the Orkneys is entitled). At Harfra, or, as it was sometimes called, Stourburgh, from the remains of a Pictish fort which was almost close to the mansion-house, the factor settled himself in the plenitude of his authority, determined to honour the name he bore by his exertions, in precept and example, to civilise the Zetlanders, and improve their very confined knowledge in the primary arts of human life.

CHAPTER V

The wind blew keen frae north and east ;
It blew upon the floor.
Quo' our goodman to our goodwife,
'Get up and bar the door.'

'My hand is in my housewifeskep,
Goodman, as ye may see ;
If it shouldna be barr'd this hundred years,
It 'a no be barr'd for me !'

Old Song.

WE can only hope that the gentle reader has not found the latter part of the last chapter extremely tedious ; but, at any rate, his impatience will scarce equal that of young Mordaunt Mertoun, who, while the lightning came flash after flash, while the wind, veering and shifting from point to point, blew with all the fury of a hurricane, and while the rain was dashed against him in deluges, stood hammering, calling, and roaring at the door of the old Place of Harfra, impatient for admittance, and at a loss to conceive any position of existing circumstances which could occasion the exclusion of a stranger, especially during such horrible weather. At length, finding his noise and vociferation were equally in vain, he fell back so far from the front of the house as was necessary to enable him to reconnoitre the chimneys ; and, amidst 'storm and shade,' could discover, to the increase of his dismay, that though noon, then the dinner-hour of these islands, was now nearly arrived, there was no smoke proceeding from the tunnels of the vents to give any note of preparation within.

Mordaunt's wrathful impatience was now changed into sympathy and alarm ; for, so long accustomed to the exuberant hospitality of the Zetland Islands, he was immediately induced to suppose some strange and unaccountable disaster had befallen the family ; and forthwith set himself to discover some place at which he could make forcible entry, in order to ascertain the

situation of the inmates, as much as to obtain shelter from the still increasing storm. His present anxiety was, however, as much thrown away as his late clamorous importunities for admittance had been. Triptolemus and his sister had heard the whole alarm without, and had already had a sharp dispute on the propriety of opening the door.

Mrs. Baby, as we have described her, was no willing renderer of the rites of hospitality. In their farm of Cauldaces, in the Mearns, she had been the dread and abhorrence of all gaberlunzie men, and travelling packmen, gipsies, long remembered beggars, and so forth; nor was there one of them so wily, as she used to boast, as could ever say they had heard the clink of her sneek. In Zetland, where the new settlers were yet strangers to the extreme honesty and simplicity of all classes, suspicion and fear joined with frugality in her desire to exclude all wandering guests of uncertain character; and the second of these motives had its effect on Triptolemus himself, who, though neither suspicious nor penurious, knew good people were scarce, good farmers scarcer, and had a reasonable share of that wisdom which looks towards self-preservation as the first law of nature. These hints may serve as a commentary on the following dialogue which took place betwixt the brother and sister.

'Now, good be gracious to us,' said Triptolemus, as he sat thumbing his old school-copy of Virgil, 'here is a pure day for the bear seed! Well spoke the wise Mantuan—*ventis surgentibus*—and then the groans of the mountains, and the long-resounding shores; but where's the woods, Baby?—tell me, I say, where we shall find the *nemorum murmur*, sister Baby, in these new seats of ours?'

'What's your foolish will?' said Baby, popping her head from out of a dark recess in the kitchen, where she was busy about some nameless deed of housewifery.

Her brother, who had addressed himself to her more from habit than intention, no sooner saw her bleak red nose, keen grey eyes, with the sharp features thereunto conforming, shaded by the flaps of the loose 'toy' which depended on each side of her eager face, than he bethought himself that his query was likely to find little acceptance from her, and therefore stood another volley before he would resume the topic.

'I say, Mr. Yellowley,' said sister Baby, coming into the middle of the room, 'what for are ye crying on me, and me in the midst of my housewifeskep?'

'Nay, for nothing at all, Baby,' answered Triptolemus,

'saving that I was saying to myself, that here we had the sea, and the wind, and the rain, sufficient enough, but where's the wood? — where's the wood, Baby, answer me that?'

'The wood!' replied Baby. 'Were I no to take better care of the wood than you, brother, there would soon be no more wood about the town than the barber's block that's on your own shoulders, Triptolemus. If ye be thinking of the wreck-wood that the callants brought in yesterday, there was six ounces of it gaed to boil your parritch this morning; though, I trow, a carefu' man wad have ta'en drammock, if breakfast he behooved to have, rather than waste baith meltith and fuel in the same morning.'

'That is to say, Baby,' replied Triptolemus, who was somewhat of a dry joker in his way, 'that when we have fire we are not to have food, and when we have food we are not to have fire, these being too great blessings to enjoy both on the same day! Good luck, you do not propose we should starve with cold and starve with hunger *unico contextu*? But, to tell you the truth, I could never away with raw oatmeal, slockened with water, in all my life. Call it drammock, or crowdie, or just what ye list, my vivers must thole fire and water.'

'The mair gowk you,' said Baby; 'can ye not make your brose on the Sunday, and sup them cauld on the Monday, since ye're sae dainty? Mony is the fairer face than yours that has licked the lip after such a cogfu'.'

'Mercy on us, sister!' said Triptolemus; 'at this rate, it's a finished field with me: I must unyoke the plough and lie down to wait for the dead-thraw. Here is that in this house wad hold all Zetland in meal for a twelvemonth, and ye grudge a cogfu' of warm parritch to me, that has sic a charge!'

'Whisht! haud your silly clavering tongue!' said Baby, looking round with apprehension; 'ye are a wise man to speak of what is in the house, and a fitting man to have the charge of it! Hark, as I live by bread, I hear a tapping at the outer yett!'

'Go and open it then, Baby,' said her brother, glad at anything that promised to interrupt the dispute.

'Go and open it, said he!' echoed Baby, half-angry, half-frightened, and half-triumphant at the superiority of her understanding over that of her brother. 'Go and open it, said he, indeed! is it to lend robbers a chance to take all that is in the house?'

'Robbers!' echoed Triptolemus, in his turn; 'there are no

more robbers in this country than there are lambs at Yule. I tell you, as I have told you an hundred times, there are no Highlandmen to harry us here. This is a land of quiet and honesty. *O fortunati nimium!*'

'And what good is St. Ninian to do ye, Tolemus?' said his sister, mistaking the quotation for a Catholic invocation. 'Besides, if there be no Highlandmen, there may be as bad. I saw sax or seven as ill-looking chields gang past the Place yesterday as ever came frae beyont Clochna-ben; ill-faur'd tools they had in their hands, whaaling-knives they ca'ed them, but they looked as like dirks and whingers as ae bit airn can look like anither. There is nae honest men carry siccan tools.'

Here the knocking and shouts of Mordaunt were very audible betwixt every swell of the horrible blast which was careering without. The brother and sister looked at each other in real perplexity and fear. 'If they have heard of the siller,' said Baby, her very nose changing with terror from red to blue, 'we are but gane folk!'

'Who speaks now, when they should hold their tongue?' said Triptolemus. 'Go to the shot-window instantly, and see how many there are of them, while I load the old Spanish-barrelled duck-gun; go as if you were stepping on new-laid eggs.'

Baby crept to the window, and reported that she saw only 'one young chield, clattering and roaring as gin he were daft. How many there might be out of sight, she could not say.'

'Out of sight! nonsense,' said Triptolemus, laying aside the ramrod with which he was loading the piece with a trembling hand. 'I will warrant them out of sight and hearing both; this is some poor fellow caught in the tempest, wants the shelter of our roof, and a little refreshment. Open the door, Baby, it's a Christian deed.'

'But is it a Christian deed of him to come in at the window, then?' said Baby, setting up a most doleful shriek, as Mordaunt Mertoun, who had forced open one of the windows, leaped down into the apartment, dripping with water like a river god. Triptolemus, in great tribulation, presented the gun which he had not yet loaded, while the intruder exclaimed, 'Hold — hold; what the devil mean ye by keeping your doors bolted in weather like this, and levelling your gun at folks' heads as you would at a sealgh's?'

'And who are you, friend, and what want you?' said

Triptolemus, lowering the butt of his gun to the floor as he spoke, and so recovering his arms.

'What do I want?' said Mordaunt; 'I want everything. I want meat, drink, and fire, a bed for the night, and a sheltie for to-morrow morning to carry me to Jarlishof.'

'And ye said there were nae caterans or sorners here?' said Baby to the agriculturist, reproachfully. 'Heard ye ever a breeless loon frae Lochaber tell his mind and his errand mair deftly? Come—come, friend,' she added, addressing herself to Mordaunt, 'put up your pipes and gang your gate: this is the house of his lordship's factor, and no place of reset for thiggers or sorners.'

Mordaunt laughed in her face at the simplicity of the request. 'Leave built walls,' he said, 'and in such a tempest as this? What take you me for?'—a gannet or a scart do you think I am, that your clapping your hands and skirling at me like a madwoman should drive me from the shelter into the storm?'

'And so you propose, young man,' said Triptolemus, gravely, 'to stay in my house, *volens nolens*—that is, whether we will or no?'

'Will!' said Mordaunt; 'what right have you to will anything about it? Do you not hear the thunder? Do you not hear the rain? Do you not see the lightning? And do you not know this is the only house within I wot not how many miles? Come, my good master and dame, this may be Scottish jesting, but it sounds strange in Zetland ears. You have let out the fire, too, and my teeth are dancing a jig in my head with cold; but I'll soon put that to rights.'

He seized the fire-tongs, raked together the embers upon the hearth, broke up into life the gathering-peat, which the hostess had calculated should have preserved the seeds of fire, without giving them forth, for many hours; then casting his eye round, saw in a corner the stock of drift-wood, which Mistress Baby had served forth by ounces, and transferred two or three logs of it at once to the hearth, which, conscious of such unwonted supply, began to transmit to the chimney such a smoke as had not issued from the Place of Harfra for many a day.

While their uninvited guest was thus making himself at home, Baby kept edging and jogging the factor to turn out the intruder. But for this undertaking Triptolemus Yellowley felt neither courage nor zeal, nor did circumstances seem at all to warrant the favourable conclusion of any fray into which he

might enter with the young stranger. The sinewy limbs and graceful form of Mordaunt Mertoun were seen to great advantage in his simple sea-dress; and with his dark sparkling eye, finely formed head, animated features, close curled dark hair, and bold, free looks, the stranger formed a very strong contrast with the host on whom he had intruded himself. Triptolemus was a short, clumsy, duck-legged disciple of Ceres, whose bottle-nose, turned up and handsomely coppered at the extremity, seemed to imitate something of an occasional treaty with Bacchus. It was like to be no equal mellay betwixt persons of such unequal form and strength; and the difference betwixt twenty and fifty years was nothing in favour of the weaker party. Besides, the factor was an honest, good-natured fellow at bottom, and being soon satisfied that his guest had no other views than those of obtaining refuge from the storm, it would, despite his sister's instigations, have been his last act to deny a boon so reasonable and necessary to a youth whose exterior was so prepossessing. He stood, therefore, considering how he could most gracefully glide into the character of the hospitable landlord out of that of the churlish defender of his domestic castle against an unauthorised intrusion, when Baby, who had stood appalled at the extreme familiarity of the stranger's address and demeanour, now spoke up for herself.

'My troth, lad,' said she to Mordaunt, 'ye are no blate, to light on at that rate, and the best of wood, too: nane of your sharney peats, but good aik timber, nae less maun serve ye!'

'You come lightly by it, dame,' said Mordaunt, carelessly; 'and you should not grudge the fire what the sea gives you for nothing. These good ribs of oak did their last duty upon earth and ocean when they could hold no longer together under the brave hearts that manned the bark.'

'And that's true, too,' said the old woman, softening; 'this maun be awsome weather by sea. Sit down and warm ye, since the sticks are alow.'

'Ay — ay,' said Triptolemus, 'it is a pleasure to see siccan a bonny bleeze. I havena seen the like o't since I left Cauld-acres.'

'And shallna see the like o't again in a hurry,' said Baby, 'unless the house take fire, or there suld be a coal-heugh found out.'

'And wherefore should not there be a coal-heugh found out?' said the factor, triumphantly — 'I say, wherefore should not a coal-heugh be found out in Zetland as well as in Fife, now

that the chamberlain has a far-sighted and discreet man upon the spot to make the necessary perquisitions ! They are baith fishing-stations, I trow !

'I tell you what it is, Tolemus Yellowley,' answered his sister, who had practical reasons to fear her brother's opening upon any false scent, 'if you promise my lord ~~some~~ mony of these bonnie-wallies, we'll no be weel hafted here before we are found out and set a-trotting again. If ane was to speak to you about a gold mine, I ken weel wha wad promise he suld have Portugal pieces clinking in his pouch before the year gaed by.'

'And why suld I not ?' said Triptolemus. 'Maybe your head does not know there is a land in Orkney called Ophir, or something very like it ; and wherefore might not Solomon, the wise king of the Jews, have sent thither his ships and his servants for four hundred and fifty talents ? I trow he knew best where to go or send, and I hope you believe in your Bible, Baby !'

Baby was silenced by an appeal to Scripture, however *mal à propos*, and only answered by an inarticulate 'humph' of incredulity or scorn, while her brother went on addressing Mordaunt. 'Yes, you shall all of you see what a change shall coin introduce even into such an unpropitious country as yours. Ye have not heard of copper, I warrant, or of ironstone, in these islands, neither ?' Mordaunt said he had heard there was copper near the Cliffs of Konigsburgh. 'Ay, and a copper scum is found on the Loch of Swana, too, young man. But the youngest of you, doubtless, thinks himself a match for such as I am !'

Baby, who, during all this while had been closely and accurately reconnoitring the youth's person, now interposed in a manner by her brother totally unexpected. 'Ye had mair need, Mr. Yellowley, to give the young man some dry clothes, and to see about getting something for him to eat, than to sit there bleezing away with your lang tales, as if the weather were not windy eneuch without your help ; and maybe the lad would drink some "bland," or sic-like, if ye had the grace to ask him.'

While Triptolemus looked astonished at such a proposal, considering the quarter it came from, Mordaunt answered, he 'should be very glad to have dry clothes, but begged to be excused from drinking until he had eaten somewhat.'

Triptolemus accordingly conducted him into another apartment, and accommodating him with a change of dress, left him

to his arrangements, while he himself returned to the kitchen, much puzzled to account for his sister's unusual fit of hospitality. 'She must be fey,'¹ he said, 'and in that case has not long to live, and though I fall heir to her tocher-goud, I am sorry for it; for she has held the house-gear well together: drawn the girth over tight it may be now and then, but the saddle sits the better.'

When Triptolemus returned to the kitchen, he found his suspicions confirmed; for his sister was in the desperate act of consigning to the pot a smoked goose, which, with others of the same tribe, had long hung in the large chimney, muttering to herself at the same time, 'It maun be eaten sune or syne, and what for no by the puir callant!'

'What is this of it, sister?' said Triptolemus. 'You have on the girdle and the pot at ance. What day is this wi' you?'

'E'en such a day as the Israelites had beside the flesh-pots of Egypt, billie Triptolemus; but ye little ken wha ye have in your house this blessed day.'

'Troth and little do I ken,' said Triptolemus, 'as little as I would ken the naig I never saw before. I would take the lad for a jagger,² but he has rather ower good havings, and has no pack.'

'Ye ken as little as ane of your ain bits o' nowt, man,' retorted sister Baby; 'if ye ken na him, do ye ken Tronda Dronsdaughter?'

'Tronda Dronsdaughter!' echoed Triptolemus; 'how should I but ken her, when I pay her twal pennies Scots by the day for working in the house here? I trow she works as if the things burned her fingers. I had better give a Scots lass a groat of English siller.'

'And that's the maist sensible word ye have said this blessed morning. Weel, but Tronda kens this lad weel, and she has often spoke to me about him. They call his father the Silent Man of Sumburgh, and they say he's uncanny.'

'Hout, hout — nonsense, nonsense; they are aye at sic trash as that,' said the brother, 'when you want a day's wark out of them: they have stepped ower the tangs, or they have met an uncanny body, or they have turned about the boat against the sun, and then there's nought to be done that day.'

'Weel — weel, brother, ye are so wise,' said Baby, 'because ye knapped Latin at St. Andrews; and can your lair tell me, then, what the lad has round his halse?'

¹ See Note 10.

² A pedlar.

'A Barcelona napkin, as wet as a dishelout, and I have just lent him one of my own overlays,' said Triptolemus.

'A Barcelona napkin!' said Baby, elevating her voice, and then suddenly lowering it, as from apprehension of being overheard. 'I say a gold chain!'

'A gold chain!' said Triptolemus.

'In troth is it, hinny; and how like you that? The folk say here, as Tronda tells me, that the king of the Drows gave it to his father, the Silent Man of Sumburgh.'

'I wish you would speak sense, or be the silent woman,' said Triptolemus. 'The upshot of it all is, then, that this lad is the rich stranger's son, and that you are giving him the goose you were to keep till Michaelmas!'

'Troth, brother, we maun do something for God's sake, and to make friends; and the lad,' added Baby, for even she was not altogether above the prejudices of her sex in favour of outward form — 'the lad has a fair face of his ain.'

'Ye would have let mony a fair face,' said Triptolemus, 'pass the door pining, if it had not been for the gold chain.'

'Nae doubt — nae doubt,' replied Barbara; 'ye wadna have me waste our substance on every thigger or sornier that has the luck to come by the door in a wet day! But this lad has a fair and a wide name in the country, and Tronda says he is to be married to a daughter of the rich Udaller, Magnus Troil, and the marriage-day is to be fixed whenever he makes choice, set him up! between the twa lasses; and so it wad be as much as our good name is worth, and our quiet forbye, to let him sit unserved, although he does come unsent for.'

'The best reason in life,' said Triptolemus, 'for letting a man into a house is, that you dare not bid him go by. However, since there is a man of quality amongst them, I will let him know whom he has to do with, in my person.' Then advancing to the door, he exclaimed, '*Heus tibi, Dave!*'

'*Adsum,*' answered the youth, entering the apartment.

'Hem!' said the erudite Triptolemus, 'not altogether deficient in his humanities, I see. I will try him further. Canst thou aught of husbandry, young gentleman?'

'Troth, sir, not I,' answered Mordaunt; 'I have been trained to plough upon the sea and to reap upon the crag.'

'Plough the sea!' said Triptolemus; 'that's a furrow requires small harrowing; and for your harvest on the crag, I suppose you mean these "scowries," or whatever you call them. It is a sort of ingathering which the Ranzelman should stop by the

law; nothing more likely to break an honest man's bones. I profess I cannot see the pleasure men propose by dangling in a rope's-end betwixt earth and heaven. In my case, I had as lief the other end of the rope were fastened to the gibbet; I should be sure of not falling, at least.'

'Now, I would only advise you to try it,' replied Mordaunt. 'Trust me, the world has few grander sensations than when one is perched in mid-air between a high-browed cliff and a roaring ocean, the rope by which you are sustained seeming scarce stronger than a silken thread, and the stone on which you have one foot steadied affording such a breadth as the kittiwake might rest upon — to feel and know all this, with the full confidence that your own agility of limb and strength of head can bring you as safe off as if you had the wing of the goshawk — this is indeed being almost independent of the earth you tread on!'

Triptolemus stared at this enthusiastic description of an amusement which had so few charms for him; and his sister, looking at the glancing eye and elevated bearing of the young adventurer, answered by ejaculating, 'My certie, lad, but ye are a brave chield!'

'A brave chield!' returned Yellowley; 'I say a brave goose, to be flitchering and fleeing in the wind when he might abide upon *terra firma*! But come, here's a goose that is more to the purpose, when once it is well boiled. Get us trenchers and salt, Baby; but in truth it will prove salt enough — a tasty morsel it is. But I think the Zetlanders be the only folk in the world that think of running such risks to catch geese, and then boiling them when they have done.'

'To be sure,' replied his sister (it was the only word they had agreed in that day), 'it would be an unco thing to bid ony gudewife in Angus or a' the Mearns boil a goose, while there was sic things as spits in the world. But wha's this neist?' she added, looking towards the entrance with great indignation. 'My certie, open doors and dogs come in; and wha opened the door to him?'

'I did, to be sure,' replied Mordaunt; 'you would not have a poor devil stand beating your deaf door-cheeks in weather like this? Here goes something, though, to help the fire,' he added, drawing out the sliding bar of oak with which the door had been secured, and throwing it on the hearth, whence it was snatched by Dame Baby in great wrath, she exclaiming at the same time —

'It's sea-borne timber, as there's little else here, and he dings it about as if it were a fir-clog! And who be you, an it please you?' she added, turning to the stranger — 'a very hallanshaker loon, as ever crossed my twa een!'

'I am a jagger, if it like your ladyship,' replied the uninvited guest, a stout, vulgar, little man, who had indeed the humble appearance of a pedlar, called 'jagger' in these islands; 'never travelled in a waur day, or was more willing to get to harbourage. Heaven be praised for fire and house-room!'

So saying, he drew a stool to the fire, and sat down without further ceremony. Dame Baby stared 'wild as grey goshawk,' and was meditating how to express her indignation in something warmer than words, for which the boiling pot seemed to offer a convenient hint, when an old half-starved serving-woman — the Tronda already mentioned — the sharer of Barbara's domestic cares, who had been as yet in some remote corner of the mansion, now hobbled into the room, and broke out into exclamations which indicated some new cause of alarm.

'O master!' and 'O mistress!' were the only sounds she could for some time articulate, and then followed them up with, 'The best in the house — the best in the house; set a' on the board, and a' will be little enough. There is auld Norna of Fitful Head, the most fearful woman in all the isles!'

'Where can she have been wandering?' said Mordaunt, not without some apparent sympathy with the surprise, if not with the alarm, of the old domestic; 'but it is needless to ask — the worse the weather, the more likely is she to be a traveller.'

'What new tramper is this?' echoed the distracted Baby, whom the quick succession of guests had driven wellnigh crazy with vexation. 'I'll soon settle her wandering, I sall warrant, if my brother has but the saul of a man in him, or if there be a pair of jougs at Scalloway!'

'The iron was never forged on stithy that would hault her,' said the old maid-servant. 'She comes — she comes. God's sake, speak her fair and canny, or we will have a ravelled hasp on the yarn-windles.'

As she spoke, a woman, tall enough almost to touch the top of the door with her cap, stepped into the room, signing the cross as she entered, and pronouncing, with a solemn voice, 'The blessing of God and St. Ronald on the open door, and their broad malison and mine upon close-handed churls!'

'And wha are ye, that are sae bauld wi' your blessing and banning in other folks' houses? What kind of country is this,

that folk cannot sit quiet for an hour, and serve Heaven, and keep their bit gear thegither, without gangrel men and women coming thigging and sorning aue after another, like a string of wild geese ?

This speech the understanding reader will easily saddle on Mistress Baby ; and what effects it might have produced on the last stranger can only be matter of conjecture, for the old servant and Mordaunt applied themselves at once to the party addressed, in order to deprecate her resentment ; the former speaking to her some words of Norse, in a tone of intercession, and Mordaunt saying in English, 'They are strangers, Norna, and know not your name or qualities ; they are unacquainted, too, with the ways of this country, and therefore we must hold them excused for their lack of hospitality.'

'I lack no hospitality, young man,' said Triptolemus, '*miseris succurrere disco*: the goose that was destined to roost in the chimney till Michaelmas is boiling in the pot for you ; but if we had twenty geese, I see we are like to find mouths to eat them every feather. This must be amended.'

'What must be amended, sordid slave ?' said the stranger Norna, turning at once upon him with an emphasis that made him start — '*what* must be amended ? Bring hither, if thou wilt, thy newfangled coulter, spades, and harrows, alter the implements of our fathers from the ploughshare to the mouse-trap ; but know thou art in the land that was won of old by the flaxen-haired "kempions" of the North, and leave us their hospitality at least, to show we come of what was once noble and generous. I say to you, beware ; while Norna looks forth at the measureless waters from the crest of Fitful Head, something is yet left that resembles power of defence. If the men of Thule have ceased to be champions, and to spread the banquet for the raven, the women have not forgotten the arts that lifted them of yore into queens and prophetesses.'

The woman who pronounced this singular tirade was as striking in appearance as extravagantly lofty in her pretensions and in her language. She might well have represented on the stage, so far as features, voice, and stature were concerned, the Bonduca or Boadicea of the Britons, or the sage Velleda, Aurinia, or any other fated pythoness who ever led to battle a tribe of the ancient Goths. Her features were high and well formed, and would have been handsome but for the ravages of time and the effects of exposure to the severe weather of her country. Age, and perhaps sorrow, had quenched, in some degree, the

fire of a dark blue eye, whose hue almost approached to black, and had sprinkled snow on such parts of her tresses as had escaped from under her cap, and were dishevelled by the rigour of the storm. Her upper garment, which dropped with water, was of a coarse, dark-coloured stuff, called wadmaal, then much used in the Zetland Islands, as also in Iceland and Norway. But as she threw this cloak back from her shoulders, a short jacket, of dark-blue velvet, stamped with figures, became visible, and the vest, which corresponded to it, was of a crimson colour, and embroidered with tarnished silver. Her girdle was plated with silver ornaments, cut into the shape of planetary signs; her blue apron was embroidered with similar devices, and covered a petticoat of crimson cloth. Strong, thick, enduring shoes, of the half-dressed leather of the country, were tied with straps, like those of the Roman buskins, over her scarlet stockings. She wore in her belt an ambiguous-looking weapon, which might pass for a sacrificing knife or dagger, as the imagination of the spectator chose to assign to the wearer the character of a priestess or of a sorceress. In her hand she held a staff, squared on all sides, and engraved with Runic characters and figures, forming one of those portable and perpetual calendars which were used among the ancient natives of Scandinavia, and which, to a superstitious eye, might have passed for a divining-rod.

Such were the appearance, features, and attire of Norna of the Fitful Head, upon whom many of the inhabitants of the island looked with observance, many with fear, and almost all with a sort of veneration. Less pregnant circumstances of suspicion would, in any other part of Scotland, have exposed her to the investigation of those cruel inquisitors who were then often invested with the delegated authority of the privy council, for the purpose of persecuting, torturing, and finally consigning to the flames, those who were accused of witchcraft or sorcery. But superstitions of this nature pass through two stages ere they become entirely obsolete. Those supposed to be possessed of supernatural powers are venerated in the earlier stages of society. As religion and knowledge increase, they are first held in hatred and horror, and are finally regarded as impostors. Scotland was in the second state: the fear of witchcraft was great, and the hatred against those suspected of it intense. Zetland was as yet a little world by itself, where, among the lower and ruder classes, so much of the ancient Northern superstition remained as cherished the original veneration for those affecting supernatural knowledge and power over the elements,

which made a constituent part of the ancient Scandinavian creed. At least, if the natives of Thule admitted that one class of magicians performed their feats by their alliance with Satan, they devoutly believed that others dealt with spirits of a different and less odious class — the ancient dwarfs, called in Zetland Trows, or Drows, the modern fairies, and so forth.

Among those who were supposed to be in league with disembodied spirits, this Norna, descended from, and representative of, a family which had long pretended to such gifts, was so eminent, that the name assigned to her, which signifies one of those fatal sisters who weave the web of human fate, had been conferred in honour of her supernatural powers. The name by which she had been actually christened was carefully concealed by herself and her parents; for to its discovery they superstitiously annexed some fatal consequences. In those times, the doubt only occurred, whether her supposed powers were acquired by lawful means. In our days, it would have been questioned whether she was an impostor, or whether her imagination was so deeply impressed with the mysteries of her supposed art that she might be in some degree a believer in her own pretensions to supernatural knowledge. Certain it is, that she performed her part with such undoubting confidence, and such striking dignity of look and action, and evinced, at the same time, such strength of language and energy of purpose, that it would have been difficult for the greatest sceptic to have doubted the reality of her enthusiasm, though he might smile at the pretensions to which it gave rise.

CHAPTER VI

If, by your art, you have
Put the wild waters in this roar, allay them.

Tempest.

THE storm had somewhat relaxed its rigour just before the entrance of Norna, otherwise she must have found it impossible to travel during the extremity of its fury. But she had hardly added herself so unexpectedly to the party whom chance had assembled at the dwelling of Triptolemus Yellowley, when the tempest suddenly resumed its former vehemence, and raged around the building with a fury which made the inmates insensible to anything except the risk that the old mansion was about to fall above their heads.

Mistress Baby gave vent to her fears in loud exclamations of 'The Lord guide us — this is surely the last day; what kind of a country of guizards and gyre-carlines is this? And you, ye fool carle,' she added, turning on her brother, for all her passions had a touch of acidity in them, 'to quit the bonny Mearns land to come here, where there is naething but sturdie beggars and gaberlunzies within ane's house, and Heaven's anger on the outside on't!'

'I tell you, sister Baby,' answered the insulted agriculturist, 'that all shall be reformed and amended — excepting,' he added, betwixt his teeth, 'the scalding humours of an ill-natured jaud, that can add bitterness to the very storm!'

The old domestic and the pedlar meanwhile exhausted themselves in entreaties to Norna, of which, as they were couched in the Norse language, the master of the house understood nothing.

She listened to them with a haughty and unmoved air, and replied at length aloud, and in English — 'I will not. What if this house be strewed in ruins before morning — where would be the world's want in the crazed projector and the niggardly pinch-commons by which it is inhabited? They will needs

come to reform Zetland customs, let them try how they like a Zetland storm. You that would not perish, quit this house !'

The pedlar seized on his little knapsack, and began hastily to brace it on his back, the old maid-servant cast her cloak about her shoulders, and both seemed to be in the act of leaving the house as fast as they could.

Triptolemus Yellowley, somewhat commoved by these appearances, asked Mordaunt, with a voice which faltered with apprehension, whether he thought there was any, that is, so very much danger.

'I cannot tell,' answered the youth, 'I have scarce ever seen such a storm. Norna can tell us better than any one when it will abate ; for no one in these islands can judge of the weather like her.'

'And is that all thou thinkest Norna can do ?' said the sibyl ; 'thou shalt know her powers are not bounded within such a narrow space. Hear me, Mordaunt, youth of a foreign land, but of a friendly heart. Dost thou quit this doomed mansion with those who now prepare to leave it ?'

'I do not — I will not, Norna,' replied Mordaunt ; 'I know not your motive for desiring me to remove, and I will not leave, upon these dark threats, the house in which I have been kindly received in such a tempest as this. If the owners are unaccustomed to our practice of unlimited hospitality, I am the more obliged to them that they have relaxed their usages and opened their doors in my behalf.'

'He is a brave lad,' said Mrs. Baby, whose superstitious feelings had been daunted by the threats of the supposed sorceress, and who, amidst her eager, narrow, and repining disposition, had, like all who possess marked character, some sparks of higher feeling, which made her sympathise with generous sentiments, though she thought it too expensive to entertain them at her own cost — 'he is a brave lad,' she again repeated, 'and worthy of ten geese, if I had them to boil for him, or roast either. I'll warrant him a gentleman's son and no churl's blood.'

'Hear me, young Mordaunt,' said Norna, 'and depart from this house. Fate has high views on you ; you shall not remain in this hovel to be crushed amid its worthless ruins, with the relics of its more worthless inhabitants, whose life is as little to the world as the vegetation of the house-leek which now grows on their thatch, and which shall soon be crushed amongst their mangled limbs.'

'I—I—I will go forth,' said Yellowley, who, despite of his bearing himself scholarly and wisely, was beginning to be terrified for the issue of the adventure; for the house was old, and the walls rocked formidably to the blast.

'To what purpose?' said his sister. 'I trust the Prince of the power of the air has not yet such-like power over those that are made in God's image that a good house should fall about our heads because a randy quean (here she darted a fierce glance at the pythoness) should boast us with her glamour, as if we were sae mony dogs to crouch at her bidding.'

'I was only wanting,' said Triptolemus, ashamed of his motion, 'to look at the bear-baird, which must be sair laid wi' this tempest; but if this honest woman like to bide wi' us, I think it were best to let us a' sit down canny thegither, till it's working weather again.'

'Honest woman!' echoed Baby. 'Foul warlock thief! Aroint ye, ye limmer!' she added, addressing Norna directly: 'out of an honest house, or, shame fa' me, but I'll take the bittle¹ to you!'

Norna cast on her a look of supreme contempt; then, stepping to the window, seemed engaged in deep contemplation of the heavens, while the old maid-servant, Tronda, drawing close to her mistress, implored, for the sake of all that was dear to man or woman, 'Do not provoke Norna of Fitful Head! You have no sic woman on the mainland of Scotland: she can ride on one of these clouds as easily as man ever rode on a sheltie.'

'I shall live to see her ride on the reek of a fat tar-barrel,' said Mistress Baby; 'and that will be a fit pacing palfrey for her.'

Again Norna regarded the enraged Mrs. Baby Yellowley with a look of that unutterable scorn which her haughty features could so well express, and moving to the window which looked to the north-west, from which quarter the gale seemed at present to blow, she stood for some time with her arms crossed, looking out upon the leaden-coloured sky, obscured as it was by the thick drift, which, coming on in successive gusts of tempest, left ever and anon sad and dreary intervals of expectation betwixt the dying and the reviving blast.

Norna regarded this war of the elements as one to whom their strife was familiar; yet the stern serenity of her features had in it a cast of awe, and at the same time of authority, as the cabalist may be supposed to look upon the spirit he has evoked, and which, though he knows how to subject him to

¹ See Note 11.

his spell, bears still an aspect appalling to flesh and blood. The attendants stood by in different attitudes, expressive of their various feelings. Mordaunt, though not indifferent to the risk in which they stood, was more curious than alarmed. He had heard of Norna's alleged power over the elements, and now expected an opportunity of judging for himself of its reality. Triptolemus Yellowley was confounded at what seemed to be far beyond the bonds of his philosophy; and, if the truth must be spoken, the worthy agriculturist was greatly more frightened than inquisitive. His sister was not in the least curious on the subject; but it was difficult to say whether anger or fear predominated in her sharp eyes and thin, compressed lips. The pedlar and old Tronda, confident that the house would never fall while the redoubted Norna was beneath its roof, held themselves ready for a start the instant she should take her departure.

Having looked on the sky for some time in a fixed attitude, and with the most profound silence, Norna at once, yet with a slow and elevated gesture, extended her staff of black oak towards that part of the heavens from which the blast came hardest, and in the midst of its fury chanted a Norwegian invocation, still preserved in the Island of Uist, under the name of the 'Song of the Reim-kennar,' though some call it the 'Song of the Tempest.' The following is a free translation, it being impossible to render literally many of the elliptical and metaphorical terms of expression, peculiar to the ancient Northern poetry:—

I

Stern eagle of the far north-west,
Thou that bearest in thy grasp the thunderbolt,
Thou whose rushing pinions stir ocean to madness,
Thou the destroyer of herds, thou the scatterer of navies,
Thou the breaker down of towers,
Amidst the scream of thy rage,
Amidst the rushing of thy onward wings,
Though thy scream be loud as the cry of a perishing nation,
Though the rushing of thy wings be like the roaring of ten thousand waves,
Yet hear, in thine ire and thy haste,
Hear thou the voice of the Reim-kennar.

II

Thou hast met the pine-trees of Drontheim,
Their dark-green heads lie prostrate beside their uprooted stems;
Thou hast met the rider of the ocean,
The tall, the strong bark of the fearless rover,
And she has struck to thee the topsail
That she had not veiled to a royal armada;

Thou hast met the tower that bears its crest among the clouds,
 The battled massive tower of the jarl of former days,
 And the copingstone of the turret
 Is lying upon its hospitable hearth ;
 But thou too shalt stoop, proud compeller of clouds,
 When thou hearest the voice of the Reim-kennar.

III

There are verses that can stop the stag in the forest,
 Ay, and when the dark-coloured dog is opening on his track ;
 There are verses can make the wild hawk pause on his wing,
 Like the falcon that wears the hood and the jesses,
 And who knows the shrill whistle of the fowler.
 Thou who canst mock at the scream of the drowning mariner,
 And the crash of the ravaged forest,
 And the groan of the overwhelmed crowds,
 When the church hath fallen in the moment of prayer,
 There are sounds which thou also must list,
 When they are chanted by the voice of the Reim-kennar.

IV

Enough of woe hast thou wrought on the ocean :
 The widows wring their hands on the beach.
 Enough of woe hast thou wrought on the land :
 The husbandman folds his arms in despair.
 Cease thou the waving of thy pinions,
 Let the ocean repose in her dark strength ;
 Cease thou the flashing of thine eye :
 Let the thunderbolt sleep in the armoury of Odin.
 Be thou still at my bidding, viewless racer of the north-western heaven,
 Sleep thou at the voice of Norna the Reim-kennar !

We have said that Mordaunt was naturally fond of romantic poetry and romantic situation ; it is not therefore surprising that he listened with interest to the wild address thus uttered to the wildest wind of the compass, in a tone of such dauntless enthusiasm. But though he had heard so much of the Runic rhyme and of the Northern spell, in the country where he had so long dwelt, he was not on this occasion so credulous as to believe that the tempest, which had raged so lately, and which was now beginning to decline, was subdued before the charmed verse of Norna. Certain it was, that the blast seemed passing away, and the apprehended danger was already over ; but it was not improbable that this issue had been for some time foreseen by the pythoness, through signs of the weather imperceptible to those who had not dwelt long in the country, or had not bestowed on the meteorological phenomena the attention of a strict and close observer. Of Norna's experience he had no doubt, and that went a far way to explain what

seemed supernatural in her demeanour. Yet still the noble countenance, half-shaded by dishevelled tresses, the air of majesty with which, in a tone of menace as well as of command, she addressed the viewless spirit of the tempest, gave him a strong inclination to believe in the ascendancy of the occult arts over the powers of nature ; for, if a woman ever moved on earth to whom such authority over the laws of the universe could belong, Norna of Fitful Head, judging from bearing, figure, and face, was born to that high destiny.

The rest of the company were less slow in receiving conviction. To Tronda and the jagger none was necessary : they had long believed in the full extent of Norna's authority over the elements. But Triptolemus and his sister gazed at each other with wondering and alarmed looks, especially when the wind began perceptibly to decline, as was remarkably visible during the pauses which Norna made betwixt the strophes of her incantation. A long silence followed the last verse, until Norna resumed her chant, but with a changed and more soothing modulation of voice and tune :

'Eagle of the far north-western waters,
Thou hast heard the voice of the Reim-kennar,
Thou hast closed thy wide sails at her bidding,
And folded them in peace by thy side.
My blessing be on thy retiring path !
When thou stoopest from thy place on high,
Soft be thy slumbers in the caverns of the unknown ocean,
Rest till destiny shall again awaken thee ;
Eagle of the north-west, thou hast heard the voice of the Reim-kennar !'

'A pretty sang that would be to keep the corn from shaking in har'st,' whispered the agriculturist to his sister ; 'we must speak her fair, Baby : she will maybe part with the secret for a hundred punds Scots.'

'An hundred fules' heads !' replied Baby ; 'bid her five marks of ready siller. I never knew a witch in my life but she was as poor as Job.'

Norna turned towards them as if she had guessed their thoughts ; it may be that she did so. She passed them with a look of the most sovereign contempt, and walking to the table on which the preparations for Mrs. Barbara's frugal meal were already disposed, she filled a small wooden quaigh from an earthen pitcher which contained bland, a subacid liquor made out of the serous part of the milk ; she broke a single morsel from a barley-cake, and having eaten and drunk, returned

towards the churlish hosts. 'I give you no thanks,' she said, 'for my refreshment, for you bid me not welcome to it; and thanks bestowed on a churl are like the dew of heaven on the cliffs of Foulah, where it finds nought that can be refreshed by its influence. I give you no thanks,' she said again, but drawing from her pocket a leathern purse that seemed large and heavy, she added, 'I pay you with what you will value more than the gratitude of the whole inhabitants of Hialtland. Say not that Norna of Fitful Head hath eaten of your bread and drunk of your cup, and left you sorrowing for the charge to which she hath put your house.' So saying, she laid on the table a small piece of antique gold coin, bearing the rude and half-defaced effigies of some ancient Northern king.

Triptolemus and his sister exclaimed against this liberality with vehemence; the first protesting that he kept no public, and the other exclaiming, 'Is the carline mad? Heard ye ever of ony of the gentle house of Clinkscale that gave meat for siller?'

'Or for love either?' muttered her brother; 'haud to that, tittie.'

'What are ye whittie-whattieing about, ye gowk?' said his gentle sister, who suspected the tenor of his murmurs. 'Gie the lady back her bonnie die there, and be blithe to be sue rid on't: it will be a selate-stane the morn, if not something worse.'

The honest factor lifted the money to return it, yet could not help being struck when he saw the impression, and his hand trembled as he handed it to his sister.

'Yes,' said the pythoness again, as if she read the thoughts of the astonished pair, 'you have seen that coin before; beware how you use it! It thrives not with the sordid or the mean-souled; it was won with honourable danger, and must be expended with honourable liberality. The treasure which lies under a cold hearth will one day, like the hidden talent, bear witness against its avaricious possessors.'

This last obscure intimation seemed to raise the alarm and the wonder of Mrs. Baby and her brother to the uttermost. The latter tried to stammer out something like an invitation to Norna to tarry with them all night, or at least to take share of the 'dinner,' so he at first called it; but looking at the company, and remembering the limited contents of the pot, he corrected the phrase, and hoped she would take some part of the 'smack, which would be on the table ere a man could loose a plough.'

'I eat not here—I sleep not here,' replied Norna; 'nay, I relieve you not only of my own presence, but I will dismiss your unwelcome guests. Mordaunt,' she added, addressing young Mertoun, 'the dark fit is past, and your father looks for you this evening.'

'Do you return in that direction?' said Mordaunt. 'I will but eat a morsel, and give you my aid, good mother, on the road. The brooks must be out, and the journey perilous.'

'Our ways lie different,' answered the sibyl, 'and Norna needs not mortal arm to aid her on the way. I am summoned far to the east, by those who know well how to smooth my passage. For thee, Bryce Snailsfoot,' she continued, speaking to the pedlar, 'speed thee on to Sumburgh: the Roost will afford thee a gallant harvest, and worthy the gathering in. Much goodly ware will ere now be seeking a new owner, and the careful skipper will sleep still enough in the deep *haaf*, and care not that bale and kist are dashing against the shores.'

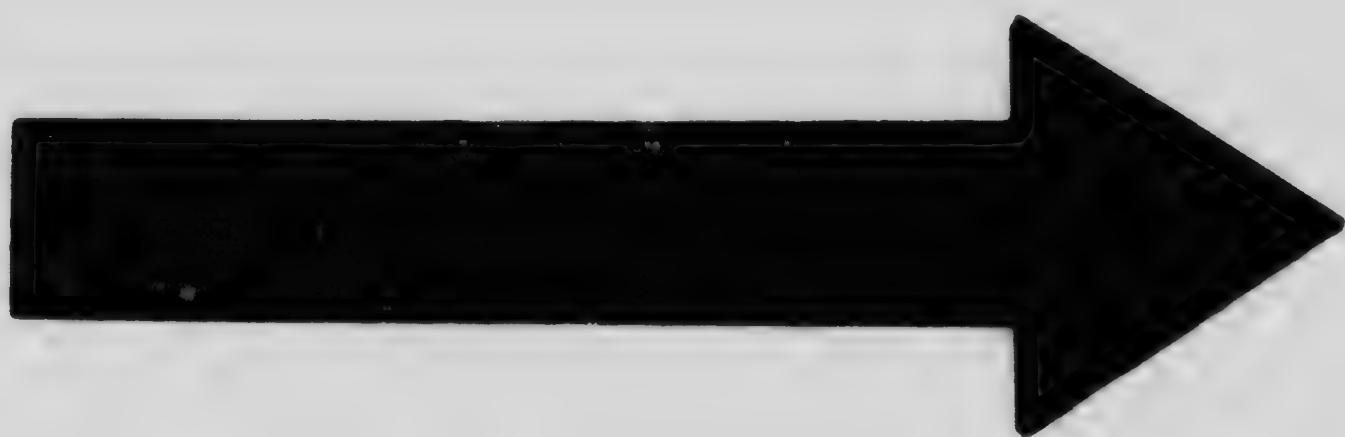
'Na—na, good mother,' answered Snailsfoot, 'I desire no man's life for my private advantage, and am just grateful for the blessing of Providence on my sma' trade. But, doubtless, one man's loss is another's gain; and as these storms destroy a' thing on land, it is but fair they sould send us something by sea. Sae, taking the freedom, like yoursell, mother, to borrow a lump of barley-bread and a draught of bland, I will bid good-day and thank you to this good gentleman and lady, and e'en go on my way to Jarlshof, as you advise.'

'Ay,' replied the pythoness, 'where the slaughter is, the eagles will be gathered; and where the wreck is on the shore, the jagger is as busy to purchase spoil as the shark to gorge upon the dead.'

This rebuke, if it was intended for such, seemed above the comprehension of the travelling-merchant, who, bent upon gain, assumed the knapsack and ell-wand, and asked Mordaunt, with the familiarity permitted in a wild country, whether he would not take company along with him?

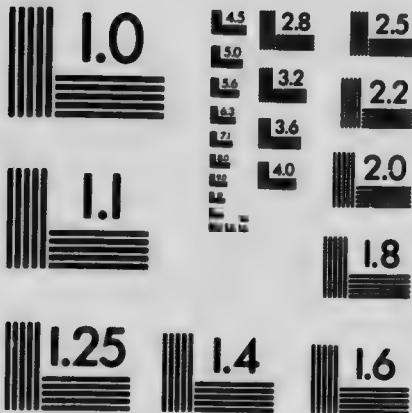
'I wait to eat some dinner with Mr. Yellowley and Mrs. Baby,' answered the youth, 'and will set forward in half an hour.'

'Then I'll just take my piece in my hand,' said the pedlar. Accordingly, he muttered a benediction, and, without more ceremony, helped himself to what, in Mrs. Baby's covetous eyes, appeared to be two-thirds of the bread, took a long pull at the jug of bland, seized on a handful of the small fish called sillocks,



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which the domestic was just placing on the board, and left the room without farther ceremony.

'My certie,' said the despoiled Mrs. Baby, 'there is the chapman's drouth¹ and his hunger baith, as folk say! If the laws against vagrants be executed this gate—— It's no that I wad shut the door against decent folk,' she said, looking to Mordaunt, 'more especially in such judgment-weather. But I see the goose is dished, poor thing.'

This she spoke in a tone of affection for the smoked goose, which, though it had long been an inanimate inhabitant of her chimney, was far more interesting to Mrs. Baby in that state than when it screamed amongst the clouds. Mordaunt laughed and took his seat, then turned to look for Norna; but she had glided from the apartment during the discussion with the pedlar.

'I am glad she is gane, the dour carline,' said Mrs. Baby, 'though she has left that piece of gowd to be an everlasting shame to us.'

'Whisht, mistress, for the love of Heaven!' said Tronda Dronsdaughter; 'wha kens where she may be this moment? We are no sure but she may hear us, though we cannot see her.'

Mistress Baby cast a startled eye around, and instantly recovering herself, for she was naturally courageous as well as violent, said, 'I bade her aroint before, and I bid her aroint again, whether she sees me or hears me, or whether she's ower the cairn and awa'. And you, ye silly sump,' she said to poor Yellowley, 'what do ye stand glowering there for? You a Saunt Andrew's student! — *you* studied lair and Latin humanities, as ye ca' them, and daunted wi' the clavers of an auld randie wife! Say your best college grace, man, and witch or nae witch, we'll eat our dinner, and defy her. And for the value of the gowden piece, it shall never be said I pouched her siller. I will gie it to some poor body — that is, I will test² upon it at my death, and keep it for a purse-penny till that day comes, and that's no using it in the way of spending siller. Say your best college grace, man, and let us eat and drink in the meantime.'

'Ye had muckle better say an *oraamus* to St. Ronald,³ and fling a saxpence ower your left shouther, master,' said Tronda.

'That ye may pick it up, ye jaud,' said the implacable

¹ See Note 12.

² Test upon it, *i. e.* leave it in my will — a mode of bestowing charity to which many are partial as well as the good dame in the text.

³ See Note 13.

Mistress Baby; 'it will be lang or ye win the worth of it ony other gate. Sit down, Triptolemus, and mindna the words of a daft wife.'

'Daft or wise,' replied Yellowley, very much disconcerted, 'she kens more than I would wish she kend. It was awfu' to see sic a wind fa' at the voice of flesh and blood like oursells; and then yon about the hearth-stane. I cannot but think ——'

'If ye cannot but think,' said Mrs. Baby, very sharply, 'at least ye can haud your tongue.'

The agriculturist made no reply, but sate down to their scanty meal, and did the honours of it with unusual heartiness to his new guest, the first of the intruders who had arrived, and the last who left them. The sillocks speedily disappeared, and the smoked goose, with its appendages, took wing so effectually that Tronda, to whom the polishing of the bones had been destined, found the task accomplished, or nearly so, to her hand. After dinner, the host produced his bottle of brandy; but Mordaunt, whose general habits were as sober almost as those of his father, laid a very light tax upon this unusual exertion of hospitality.

During the meal, they learned so much of young Mordaunt and of his father that even Baby resisted his wish to reassume his wet garments, and pressed him (at the risk of an expensive supper being added to the charges of the day) to tarry with them till the next morning. But what Norna had said excited the youth's wish to reach home, nor, however far the hospitality of Stourburgh was extended in his behalf, did the house present any particular temptations to induce him to remain there longer. He therefore accepted the loan of the factor's clothes, promising to return them and send for his own; and took a civil leave of his host and Mistress Baby, the latter of whom, however affected by the loss of her goose, could not but think the cost well bestowed (since it was to be expended at all) upon so handsome and cheerful a youth.

CHAPTER VII

She does no work by halves, yon raving ocean ;
Engulfing those she strangles, her wild womb
Affords the mariners whom she hath dealt on,
Their death at once, and sepulchre.

Old Play.

THERE were ten 'lang Scots miles' betwixt Stourburgh and Jarlshof; and though the pedestrian did not number all the impediments which crossed Tam o' Shanter's path — for in a country where there are neither hedges nor stone inclosures, there can be neither 'slaps nor stiles' — yet the number and nature of the 'mosses and waters' which he had to cross in his peregrination was fully sufficient to balance the account, and to render his journey as toilsome and dangerous as Tam o' Shanter's celebrated retreat from Ayr. Neither witch nor warlock crossed Mordaunt's path, however. The length of the day was already considerable, and he arrived safe at Jarlshof by eleven o'clock at night. All was still and dark round the mansion, and it was not till he had whistled twice or thrice beneath Swertha's window that she replied to the signal.

At the first sound, Swertha fell into an agreeable dream of a young whale-fisher who some forty years since used to make such a signal beneath the window of her hut; at the second, she waked to remember that Johnnie Fea had slept sound among the frozen waves of Greenland for this many a year, and that she was Mr. Mertoun's governante at Jarlshof; at the third, she arose and opened the window.

'Whae is that,' she demanded, 'at sic an hour of the night?'

'It is I,' said the youth.

'And what for comena ye in? The door's on the latch, there is a gathering-peat on the kitchen fire, and a spunk beside it; ye can light your ain candle.'

'All well,' replied Mordaunt; 'but I want to know how my father is.'

'Just in his ordinary, gude gentleman; asking for you, Maister Mordaunt; ye are ower far and ower late in your walks, young gentleman.'

'Then the dark hour has passed, Swertha?'

'In troth has it, Maister Mordaunt,' answered the governor; 'and your father is very reasonably good-natured for him, poor gentleman. I spake to him twice yesterday without his speaking first; and the first time he answered me as civil as you could do, and the neist time he bade me no plague him; and then, thought I, three times were aye canny, so I spake to him again for luck's sake, and he called me a chattering old devil; but it was quite and clean in a civil sort of way.'

'Enough — enough, Swertha,' answered Mordaunt; 'and now get up and find me something to eat, for I have dined but poorly.'

'Then you have been at the new folks' at Stourburgh; for there is no another house in a' the isles but they wad hae gi'en ye the best share of the best they had. Saw ye aught of Norna of the Fitful Head? She went to Stourburgh this morning, and returned to the town at night.'

'Returned! then she is here? How could she travel three leagues and better in so short a time?'

'Wha kens how she travels?' replied Swertha; 'but I heard her tell the Ranzelman wi' my ain lugs that she intended that day to have gone on to Burgh-Westra, to speak with Minna Troil, but she had seen that at Stourburgh — indeed, she said at Harfra, for she never calls it by the other name of Stourburgh — that sent her back to our town. But gang your ways round, and ye shall have plenty of supper: ours is nae toom pantry, and still less a locked ane, though my master be a stranger, and no just that tight in the upper rigging, as the Ranzelman says.'

Mordaunt walked round to the kitchen accordingly, where Swertha's care speedily accommodated him with a plentiful though coarse meal, which indemnified him for the scanty hospitality he had experienced at Stourburgh.

In the morning, some feelings of fatigue made young Merton later than usual in leaving his bed; so that, contrary to what was the ordinary case, he found his father in the apartment where they ate, and which served them indeed for every common purpose, save that of a bedchamber or of a kitchen. The son greeted the father in mute reverence, and waited until he should address him.

'You were absent yesterday, Mordaunt?' said his father.

Mordaunt's absence had lasted a week and more ; but he had often observed that his father never seemed to notice how time passed during the period when he was affected with his sullen vapours. He assented to what the elder Mr. Mertoun had said.

'And you were at Burgh-Westra, as I think ?' continued his father.

'Yes, sir,' replied Mordaunt.

The elder Mertoun was then silent for some time, and paced the floor in deep silence, with an air of sombre reflection, which seemed as if he were about to relapse into his moody fit. Suddenly turning to his son, however, he observed, in the tone of a query, 'Magnus Troil has two daughters — they must be now young women ; they are thought handsome, of course ?'

'Very generally, sir,' answered Mordaunt, rather surprised to hear his father making any inquiries about the individuals of a sex which he usually thought so light of — a surprise which was much increased by the next question, put as abruptly as the former.

'Which think you the handsomest ?'

'I, sir ?' replied his son with some wonder, but without embarrassment, 'I really am no judge. I never considered which was absolutely the handsomest. They are both very pretty young women.'

'You evade my question, Mordaunt ; perhaps I have some very particular reason for my wish to be acquainted with your taste in this matter. I am not used to waste words for no purpose. I ask you again, which of Magnus Troil's daughters you think most handsome ?'

'Really, sir,' replied Mordaunt — 'but you only jest in asking me such a question.'

'Young man,' replied Mertoun, with eyes which began to roll and sparkle with impatience, 'I *never* jest. I desire an answer to my question.'

'Then, upon my word, sir,' said Mordaunt, 'it is not in my power to form a judgment betwixt the young ladies ; they are both very pretty, but by no means like each other. Minna is dark-haired, and more grave than her sister — more serious, but by no means either dull or sullen.'

'Um,' replied his father ; 'you have been gravely brought up, and this Minna, I suppose, pleases you most ?'

'No, sir, really I can give her no preference over her sister Brenda, who is as gay as a lamb in a spring morning ; less

tall than her sister, but so well formed and so excellent a dancer——

‘That she is best qualified to amuse the young man who has a dull home and a moody father?’ said Mr. Mertoun.

Nothing in his father’s conduct had ever surprised Mordaunt so much as the obstinacy with which he seemed to pursue a theme so foreign to his general train of thought and habits of conversation; but he contented himself with answering once more, ‘That both the young ladies were highly admirable, but he had never thought of them with the wish to do either injustice by ranking her lower than her sister; that others would probably decide between them, as they happened to be partial to a grave or a gay disposition, or to a dark or fair complexion; but that he could see no excellent quality in the one that was not balanced by something equally captivating in the other.’

It is possible that even the coolness with which Mordaunt made this explanation might not have satisfied his father concerning the subject of investigation; but Swertha at this moment entered with breakfast, and the youth, notwithstanding his late supper, engaged in that meal with an air which satisfied Mertoun that he held it matter of more grave importance than the conversation which they had just had, and that he had nothing more to say upon the subject explanatory of the answers he had already given. He shaded his brow with his hand, and looked long fixedly upon the young man as he was busied with his morning meal. There was neither abstraction nor a sense of being observed in any of his motions: all was frank, natural, and open.

‘He is fancy free,’ muttered Mertoun to himself, ‘so young, so lively, and so imaginative, so handsome and so attractive in face and person, strange that at his age, and in his circumstances, he should have avoided the meshes which catch all the world beside!’

When the breakfast was over, the elder Mertoun, instead of proposing, as usual, that his son, who awaited his commands, should betake himself to one branch or other of his studies, assumed his hat and staff, and desired that Mordaunt should accompany him to the top of the cliff, called Sumburgh Head, and from thence look out upon the state of the ocean, agitated as it must still be by the tempest of the preceding day. Mordaunt was at the age when young men willingly exchange sedentary pursuits for active exercise, and started up with alacrity to

comply with his father's request ; and in the course of a few minutes they were mounting together the hill, which, ascending from the land side in a long, steep, and grassy slope, sinks at once from the summit to the sea in an abrupt and tremendous precipice.

The day was delightful ; there was just so much motion in the air as to disturb the little fleecy clouds which were scattered on the horizon, and by floating them occasionally over the sun, to chequer the landscape with that variety of light and shade which often gives to a bare and uninclosed scene, for the time at least, a species of charm approaching to the varieties of a cultivated and planted country. A thousand flitting hues of light and shade played over the expanse of wild moor, rocks, and inlets, which, as they climbed higher and higher, spread in wide and wider circuit around them.

The elder Mertoun often paused and looked around upon the scene, and for some time his son supposed that he halted to enjoy its beauties ; but as they ascended still higher up the hill, he remarked his shortened breath and his uncertain and toilsome step, and became assured, with some feelings of alarm, that his father's strength was, for the moment, exhausted, and that he found the ascent more toilsome and fatiguing than usual. To draw close to his side, and offer him in silence the assistance of his arm, was an act of youthful deference to advanced age, as well as of filial reverence ; and Mertoun seemed at first so to receive it, for he took in silence the advantage of the aid thus afforded him.

It was but for two or three minutes, however, that the father availed himself of his son's support. They had not ascended fifty yards farther ere he pushed Mordaunt suddenly if not rudely, from him ; and, as if stung into exertion by some sudden recollection, began to mount the acclivity with such long and quick steps that Mordaunt, in his turn, was obliged to exert himself to keep pace with him. He knew his father's peculiarity of disposition ; he was aware, from many slight circumstances, that he loved him not even while he took much pains with his education, and while he seemed to be the sole object of his care upon earth. But the conviction had never been more strongly or more powerfully forced upon him than by the hasty churlishness with which Mertoun rejected from a son that assistance which most elderly men are willing to receive from youths with whom they are but slightly connected, as a tribute which it is alike graceful to yield and pleasing to

receive. Mertoun, however, did not seem to perceive the effect which his unkindness had produced upon his son's feelings. He paused upon a sort of level terrace, which they had now attained, and addressed his son with an indifferent tone, which seemed in some degree affected.

'Since you have so few inducements, Mordaunt, to remain in these wild islands, I suppose you sometimes wish to look a little more abroad into the world?'

'By my word, sir,' replied Mordaunt, 'I cannot say I ever have thought on such a subject.'

'And why not, young man?' demanded his father; 'it were but natural, I think, at your age. At your age, the fair and varied breadth of Britain could not gratify me, much less the compass of a sea-girdled peat-moss.'

'I have never thought of leaving Zetland, sir,' replied the son. 'I am happy here, and have friends. You yourself, sir, would miss me, unless indeed ——'

'Why, thou wouldst not persuade me,' said his father, somewhat hastily, 'that you stay here, or desire to stay here, for the love of me?'

'Why should I not, sir?' answered Mordaunt, mildly; 'it is my duty, and I hope I have hitherto performed it.'

'Oh ay,' repeated Mertoun, in the same tone, 'your duty — your duty. So it is the duty of the dog to follow the groom that feeds him.'

'And does he not do so, sir?' said Mordaunt.

'Ay,' said his father, turning his head aside; 'but he fawns only on those who caress him.'

'I hope, sir,' replied Mordaunt, 'I have not been found deficient?'

'Say no more on't — say no more on't,' said Mertoun, abruptly; 'we have both done enough by each other; we must soon part. Let that be our comfort, if our separation should require comfort.'

'I shall be ready to obey your wishes,' said Mordaunt, not altogether displeased at what promised him an opportunity of looking farther abroad into the world. 'I presume it will be your pleasure that I commence my travels with a season at the whale-fishing.'

'Whale-fishing!' replied Mertoun; 'that were a mode indeed of seeing the world! but thou speakest but as thou hast learned. Enough of this for the present. Tell me where you had shelter from the storm yesterday?'

'At Stourburgh, the house of the new factor from Scotland.'
'A pedantic, fantastic, visionary schemer,' said Mertoun;
'and whom saw you there?'

'His sister, sir,' replied Mordaunt, 'and old Norna of the Pitful Head.'

'What! the mistress of the potent spell,' answered Mertoun, with a sneer — 'she who can change the wind by pulling her curch on one side, as King Erick use to do by turning his cap? The dame journeys far from home; how fares she? Does she get rich by selling favourable winds' to those who are port-bound?'

'I really do not know, sir,' said Mordaunt, whom certain recollections prevented from freely entering into his father's humour.

'You think the matter too serious to be jested with, or perhaps esteem her merchandise too light to be cared after?' continued Mertoun in the same sarcastic tone, which was the nearest approach he ever made to cheerfulness; 'but consider it more deeply. Everything in the universe is bought and sold, and why not wind, if the merchant can find purchasers? The earth is rented, from its surface down to its most central mines; the fire, and the means of feeding it, are currently bought and sold; the wretches that sweep the boisterous ocean with their nets pay ransom for the privilege of being drowned in it. What title has the air to be exempted from the universal course of traffic? All above the earth, under the earth, and around the earth has its price, its sellers, and its purchasers. In many countries the priests will sell you a portion of Heaven; in all countries men are willing to buy, in exchange for health, wealth, and peace of conscience, a full allowance of Hell. Why should not Norna pursue her traffic?'

'Nay, I know no reason against it,' replied Mordaunt; 'only I wish she would part with the commodity in smaller quantities. Yesterday she was a wholesale dealer; whoever treated with her had too good a pennyworth.'

'It is even so,' said the father, pausing on the verge of the wild promontory which they had attained, where the huge precipice sinks abruptly down on the wide and tempestuous ocean, 'and the effects are still visible.'

The face of that lofty cape is composed of the soft and crumbling stone called sand-flag, which gradually becomes decomposed, and yields to the action of the atmosphere, and is

¹ See Note 14.

split into large masses, that hang loose upon the verge of the precipice, and, detached from it by the fury of the tempests, often descend with great fury into the vexed abyss which lashes the foot of the rock. Numbers of these huge fragments lie strewed beneath the rocks from which they have fallen, and amongst these the tide foams and rages with a fury peculiar to these latitudes.

At the period when Mertoun and his son looked from the verge of the precipice, the wide sea still heaved and swelled with the agitation of yesterday's storm, which had been far too violent in its effects on the ocean to subside speedily. The tide therefore poured on the headland with a fury deafening to the ear and dizzying to the eye, threatened instant destruction to whatever might be at the time involved in its current. The sight of nature, in her magnificence, or in her beauty, or in her terrors, has at all times an overpowering interest, which even habit cannot greatly weaken; and both father and son sat themselves down on the cliff to look out upon that unbounded war of waters which rolled in their wrath to the foot of the precipice.

At once Mordaunt, whose eyes were sharper, and probably his attention more alert, than that of his father, started up and exclaimed, 'God in Heaven! there is a vessel in the Roost!'

Mertoun looked to the north-westward, and an object was visible amid the rolling tide. 'She shows no sail,' he observed; and immediately added, after looking at the object through his spy-glass, 'She is dismasted, and lies a sheer hulk upon the water.'

'And is drifting on the Sumburgh Head,' exclaimed Mordaunt, struck with horror, 'without the slightest means of weathering the cape!'

'She makes no effort,' answered his father; 'she is probably deserted by her crew.'

'And in such a day as yesterday,' replied Mordaunt, 'when no open boat could live were she manned with the best men ever handled an oar: all must have perished.'

'It is most probable,' said his father, with stern composure; 'and one day, sooner or later, all must have perished. What signifies whether the fowler, whom nothing escapes, caught them up at one swoop from yonder shattered deck, or whether he latched them individually, as chance gave them to his grasp? What signifies it? The deck, the battlefield are scarce more fatal to us than our table and our bed; and we are saved

from the one, merely to drag out a heartless and wearisome existence till we perish at the other. Would the hour were come — that hour which reason would teach us to wish for, were it not that nature has implanted the fear of it so strongly within us! You wonder at such a reflection, because life is yet new to you. Ere you have attained my age, it will be the familiar companion of your thoughts.

'Surely, sir,' replied Mordaunt, 'such distaste to life is not the necessary consequence of advanced age?'

'To all who have sense to estimate that which it is really worth,' said Mertoun. 'Those who, like Magnus Troil, possess so much of the animal impulse about them as to derive pleasure from sensual gratification may, perhaps, like the animals, feel pleasure in mere existence.'

Mordaunt liked neither the doctrine nor the example. He thought a man who discharged his duties towards others as well as the good old Udaller had a better right to have the sun shine fair on his setting than that which he might derive from mere insensibility. But he let the subject drop, for to dispute with his father had always the effect of irritating him, and again he adverted to the condition of the wreck.

The hulk, for it was little better, was now in the very midst of the current, and drifting at a great rate towards the foot of the precipice, upon whose verge they were placed. Yet it was a long while ere they had a distinct view of the object which they had at first seen as a black speck amongst the waters, and then, at a nearer distance, like a whale, which now scarce shows its back-fin above the waves, now throws to view its large black side. Now, however, they could more distinctly observe the appearance of the ship, for the huge swelling waves which bore her forward to the shore heaved her alternately high upon the surface, and then plunged her into the trough or furrow of the sea. She seemed a vessel of two or three hundred tons, fitted up for defence, for they could see her port-holes. She had been dismasted probably in the gale of the preceding day, and lay water-logged on the waves, a prey to their violence. It appeared certain that the crew, finding themselves unable either to direct the vessel's course or to relieve her by pumping, had taken to their boats and left her to her fate. All apprehensions were therefore unnecessary, so far as the immediate loss of human lives was concerned; and yet it was not without a feeling of breathless awe that Mordaunt and his father beheld the vessel — that rare masterpiece by which human genius

aspires to surmount the waves and contend with the winds — upon the point of falling a prey to them.

Onward she came, the large black hulk seeming larger at every fathom's length. She came nearer, until she bestrode the summit of one tremendous billow, which rolled on with her unbroken, till the wave and its burden were precipitated against the rock, and then the triumph of the elements over the work of human hands was at once completed. One wave, we have said, made the wrecked vessel completely manifest in her whole bulk, as it raised her and bore her onward against the face of the precipice. But when that wave receded from the foot of the rock, the ship had ceased to exist; and the retiring billow only bore back a quantity of beams, planks, casks, and similar objects, which swept out to the offing, to be brought in again by the next wave, and again precipitated upon the face of the rock.

It was at this moment that Mordaunt conceived he saw a man floating on a plank or water-cask, which, drifting away from the main current, seemed about to go ashore upon a small spot of sand, where the water was shallow and the waves broke more smoothly. To see the danger and to exclaim, 'He lives, and may yet be saved!' was the first impulse of the fearless Mordaunt. The next was, after one rapid glance at the front of the cliff, to precipitate himself — such seemed the rapidity of his movement — from the verge, and to commence, by means of slight fissures, projections, and crevices in the rock, a descent which, to a spectator, appeared little else than an act of absolute insanity.

'Stop, I command you, rash boy,' said his father; 'the attempt is death. Stop, and take a safer path to the left.' But Mordaunt was already completely engaged in his perilous enterprise.

'Why should I prevent him?' said his father, checking his anxiety with the stern and unfeeling philosophy whose principles he had adopted. 'Should he die now, full of generous and high feeling, eager in the cause of humanity, happy in the exertion of his own conscious activity and youthful strength — should he die now, will he not escape misanthropy, and remorse, and age, and the consciousness of decaying powers, both of body and mind? I will not look upon it, however. I will not — I cannot behold this young light so suddenly quenched.'

He turned from the precipice accordingly, and hastening to the left for more than a quarter of a mile, he proceeded towards

a 'riva,' or cleft in the rock, containing a path, called Erick's Steps, neither safe, indeed, nor easy, but the only one by which the inhabitants of Jarlishof were wont, for any purpose, to seek access to the foot of the precipice.

But, long ere Mertoun had reached even the upper end of the pass, his adventurous and active son had accomplished his more desperate enterprise. He had been in vain turned aside from the direct line of descent by the intervention of difficulties which he had not seen from above: his route became only more circuitous, but could not be interrupted. More than once, large fragments to which he was about to entrust his weight gave way before him, and thundered down into the tormented ocean; and in one or two instances such detached pieces of rock rushed after him, as if to bear him headlong in their course. A courageous heart, a steady eye, a tenacious hand, and a firm foot carried him through his desperate attempt; and in the space of seven minutes he stood at the bottom of the cliff from the verge of which he had achieved his perilous descent.

The place which he now occupied was the small projecting spot of stones, sand, and gravel that extended a little way into the sea, which on the right hand lashed the very bottom of the precipice, and on the left was scarce divided from it by a small wave-worn portion of beach that extended as far as the foot of the rent in the rocks called Erick's Steps, by which Mordaunt's father proposed to descend.

When the vessel split and went to pieces, all was swallowed up in the ocean which had, after the first shock, been seen to float upon the waves, excepting only a few pieces of wreck, casks, chests, and the like, which a strong eddy, formed by the reflux of the waves, had landed, or at least grounded, upon the shallow where Mordaunt now stood. Amongst these, his eager eye discovered the object that had at first engaged his attention, and which now, seen at nigher distance, proved to be in truth a man, and in a most precarious state. His arms were still wrapt with a close and convulsive grasp round the plank to which he had clung in the moment of the shock, but sense and the power of motion were fled; and, from the situation in which the plank lay, partly grounded upon the beach, partly floating in the sea, there was every chance that it might be again washed off shore, in which case death was inevitable. Just as he had made himself aware of these circumstances, Mordaunt beheld a huge wave advancing, and hastened to interpose his aid ere



MORDAUNT RESCUES CLEVELAND.
From a painting by Sam Bough, A.R.S.A.

it burst, aware that the reflux might probably sweep away the sufferer.

He rushed into the surf, and fastened on the body with the same tenacity, though under a different impulse, with that wherewith the hound seizes his prey. The strength of the retiring wave proved even stronger than he had expected, and it was not without a struggle for his own life, as well as for that of the stranger, that Mordaunt resisted being swept off with the receding billow, when, though an adroit swimmer, the strength of the tide must either have dashed him against the rocks or hurried him out to sea. He stood his ground, however, and ere another such billow had returned, he drew up, upon the small slip of dry sand, both the body of the stranger and the plank to which he continued firmly attached. But how to save and to recall the means of ebbing life and strength, and how to remove into a place of greater safety the sufferer, who was incapable of giving any assistance towards his own preservation, were questions which Mordaunt asked himself eagerly, but in vain.

He looked to the summit of the cliff on which he had left his father, and shouted to him for his assistance; but his eye could not distinguish his form, and his voice was only answered by the scream of the sea-birds. He gazed again on the sufferer. A dress richly laced, according to the fashion of the times, fine linen, and rings upon his fingers, evinced he was a man of superior rank; and his features showed youth and comeliness, notwithstanding they were pallid and disfigured. He still breathed, but so feebly that his respiration was almost imperceptible, and life seemed to keep such slight hold of his frame that there was every reason to fear it would become altogether extinguished, unless it were speedily reinforced. To loosen the handkerchief from his neck, to raise him with his face towards the breeze, to support him with his arms, was all that Mordaunt could do for his assistance, whilst he anxiously looked for some one who might lend his aid in dragging the unfortunate to a more safe situation.

At this moment he beheld a man advancing slowly and cautiously along the beach. He was in hopes, at first, it was his father, but instantly recollected that he had not had time to come round by the circuitous descent to which he must necessarily have recourse, and besides, he saw that the man who approached him was shorter in stature.

As he came nearer, Mordaunt was at no loss to recognise

pedlar whom the day before he had met with at Harfra, and who was known to him before upon many occasions. He shouted as loud as he could, 'Bryce, hollo! — Bryce, come hither!' But the merchant, intent upon picking up some of the spoils of the wreck, and upon dragging them out of reach of the tide, paid for some time little attention to his shouts.

When he did at length approach Mordaunt, it was not to lend him his aid, but to remonstrate with him on his rashness in undertaking the charitable office. 'Are you mad?' said he; 'you that have lived sae lang in Zetland, to risk the saving of a drowning man? Wot ye not, if you bring him to life again, he will be sure to do you some capital injury?' 'Come, Master Mordaunt, bear a hand to what's mair to the purpose. Help me to get ane or twa of these kists ashore before anybody else comes, and we shall share, like good Christians, what God sends us, and be thankful.'

Mordaunt was indeed no stranger to this inhuman superstition, current at a former period among the lower orders of the Zetlanders, and the more generally adopted, perhaps, that it served as an apology for refusing assistance to the unfortunate victims of shipwreck, while they made plunder of their goods. At any rate, the opinion, that to save a drowning man was to run the risk of future injury from him, formed a strange contradiction in the character of these islanders, who, hospitable, generous, and disinterested on all other occasions, were sometimes, nevertheless, induced by this superstition to refuse their aid in those mortal emergencies which were so common upon their rocky and stormy coasts. We are happy to add, that the exhortation and example of the proprietors have eradicated even the traces of this inhuman belief, of which there might be some observed within the memory of those now alive. It is strange that the minds of men should have ever been hardened towards those involved in a distress to which they themselves were so constantly exposed; but perhaps the frequent sight and consciousness of such danger tends to blunt the feelings to its consequences, whether affecting ourselves or others.

Bryce was remarkably tenacious of this ancient belief; the more so, perhaps, that the mounting of his pack depended less upon the warehouses of Lerwick or Kirkwall than on the consequences of such a north-western gale as that of the day preceding; for which (being a man who, in his own way, pro-

¹ See Reluctance to save Drowning Men. Note 15.

fessed great devotion) he seldom failed to express his grateful thanks to Heaven. It was indeed said of him, that, if he had spent the same time in assisting the wrecked seamen which he had employed in rifling their bales and boxes, he would have saved many lives, and lost much linen. He paid no sort of attention to the repeated entreaties of Mordaunt, although he was now upon the same slip of sand with him. It was well known to Bryce as a place on which the eddy was likely to land such spoils as the ocean disgorged; and, to improve the favourable moment, he occupied himself exclusively in securing and appropriating whatever seemed most portable and of greatest value. At length, Mordaunt saw the honest pedlar fix his views upon a strong sea-chest, framed of some Indian wood, well secured by brass plates, and seeming to be of a foreign construction. The stout lock resisted all Bryce's efforts to open it, until, with great composure, he plucked from his pocket a very neat hammer and chisel, and began forcing the hinges.

Incensed beyond patience at his assurance, Mordaunt caught up a wooden stretcher which lay near him, and laying his charge softly on the sand, approached Bryce with a menacing gesture and exclaimed, 'You cold-blooded, inhuman rascal! either get up instantly and lend me your assistance to recover this man, and bear him out of danger from the surf, or I will not only beat you to a mummy on the spot, but inform Magnus Troil of your thievery, that he may have you flogged till your bones are bare, and then banish you from the Mainland!'

The lid of the chest had just sprung open as this rough address saluted Bryce's ears, and the inside presented a tempting view of wearing-apparel for sea and land, shirts, plain and with lace ruffles, a silver compass, a silver-hilted sword, and other valuable articles, which the pedlar well knew to be such as stir in the trade. He was half-disposed to start up, draw the sword, which was a cut-and-thrust, and 'darraign battaile,' as Spenser says, rather than quit his prize or brook interruption. Being, though short, a stout, square-made personage, and not much past the prime of life, having besides the better weapon, he might have given Mordaunt more trouble than his benevolent knight-errantry deserved.

Already, as with vehemence he repeated his injunctions that Bryce should forbear his plunder and come to the assistance of the dying man, the pedlar retorted with a voice of defiance, 'Dinna swear, sir — dinna swear, sir: I will endure no swearing

in my presence; and if you lay a finger on me, that am taking the lawful spoil of the Egyptians, I will give ye a lesson ye shall remember from this day to Yule!

Mordaunt would speedily have put the pedlar's courage to the test, but a voice behind him suddenly said, 'Forbear!' It was the voice of Norna of the Fitful Head, who, during the heat of their altercation, had approached them unobserved. 'Forbear!' she repeated; 'and, Bryce, do thou render Mordaunt the assistance he requires. It shall avail thee more, and it is I who say the word, than all that you could earn to-day besides.'

'It is se'enteen hundred linen,' said the pedlar, giving a tweak to one of the shirts, in that knowing manner with which matrons and judges ascertain the texture of the linen — 'it's se'enteen hundred linen, and as strong as an it were dowlas. Nevertheless, mother, your bidding is to be done; and I would have done Mr. Mordaunt's bidding too,' he added, relaxing from his note of defiance into the deferential whining tone with which he cajoled his customers, 'if he hadna made use of profane oaths, which made my very flesh grow, and caused me, in some sort, to forget myself.' He then took a flask from his pocket, and approached the shipwrecked man. 'It's the best of brandy,' he said; 'and if that doesna cure him, I ken nought that will.' So saying, he took a preliminary gulp himself, as if to show the quality of the liquor, and was about to put it to the man's mouth, when, suddenly withholding his hand, he looked at Norna — 'You ensure me against all risk of evil from him, if I am to render him my help? Ye ken yoursell what folk say, mother.'

For all other answer, Norna took the bottle from the pedlar's hand, and began to chafe the temples and throat of the shipwrecked man; directing Mordaunt how to hold his head, so as to afford him the means of disgorging the sea-water which he had swallowed during his immersion.

The pedlar looked on inactive for a moment, and then said, 'To be sure, there is not the same risk in helping him, now he is out of the water, and lying high and dry on the beach; and to be sure, the principal danger is to those who first touch him; and, to be sure, it is a world's pity to see how these rings are pinching the puir creature's swalled fingers: they make his hand as blue as a partan's back before boiling.' So saying, he seized one of the man's cold hands, which had just, by a tremulous motion, indicated the return of life, and began his charitable work of removing the rings, which seemed to be of some value.

'As you love your life, forbear,' said Norna, sternly, 'I will lay that on you which shall spoil your travels through the isles.'

'Now, for mercy's sake, mother, say nae mair about it,' said the pedlar, 'and I'll e'en do your pleasure in your ain way! I *did* feel a rheumatise in my back-spauld yestreen; and it wad be a sair thing for the like of me to be debarred my quiet walk round the country, in the way of trade — making the honest penny, and helping myself with what Providence sends on our coasts.'

'Peace, then,' said the woman — 'peace, as thou wouldst not rue it; and take this man on thy broad shoulders. His life is of value, and you will be rewarded.'

'I had muckle need,' said the pedlar, pensively looking at the lidless chest and the other matters which strewed the sand; 'for he has comed between me and as muckle spreicherie as wad hae made a man of me for the rest of my life; and now it maun lie here till the next tide sweep it a' down the Roost, after them that aught it yesterday morning.'

'Fear not,' said Norna, 'it will come to man's use. See, there come carrion-crows of scent as keen as thine own.'

She spoke truly; for several of the people from the hamlet of Jarlshof were now hastening along the beach, to have their share in the spoil. The pedlar beheld them approach with a deep groan. 'Ay — ay,' he said, 'the folk of Jarlshof, they will make clean wark; they are kend for that far and wide; they winna leave the value of a rotten ratlin; and what's waur, there isna ane o' them has mense or sense enough to give thanks for the mercies when they have gotten them. There is the auld Ranzelman, Neil Ronaldson, that canna walk a mile to hear the minister, but he will hirple ten if he hears of a ship embayed.'

Norna, however, seemed to possess over him so complete an ascendancy, that he no longer hesitated to take the man, who now gave strong symptoms of reviving existence, upon his shoulders; and, assisted by Mordaunt, trudged along the sea-beach with his burden, without farther remonstrance. Ere he was borne off, the stranger pointed to the chest, and attempted to mutter something, to which Norna replied, 'Enough. It shall be secured.'

Advancing towards the passage called Erick's Steps, by which they were to ascend the cliffs, they met the people from Jarlshof hastening in the opposite direction. Man and woman,

as they passed, reverently made room for Norna, and saluted her, not without an expression of fear upon some of their faces. She passed them a few paces, and then turning back, called aloud to the Ranzelman, who (though the practice was more common than legal) was attending the rest of the hamlet upon this plundering expedition. 'Neil Ronaldson,' she said, 'mark my words. There stands yonder a chest, from which the lid has been just prized off. Look it be brought down to your own house at Jarlishof, just as it now is. Beware of moving or touching the slightest article. He were better in his grave that so much as looks at the contents. I speak not for nought, nor in aught will I be disobeyed.'

'Your pleasure shall be done, mother,' said Ronaldson. 'I warrant we will not break bulk, since sic is your bidding.'

Far behind the rest of the villagers followed an old woman, talking to herself, and cursing her own decrepitude, which kept her the last of the party, yet pressing forward with all her might to get her share of the spoil.

When they met her, Mordaunt was astonished to recognise his father's old housekeeper. 'How now,' he said, 'Swertha, what make you so far from home?'

'Just e'en daiking out to look after my auld master and your honour,' replied Swertha, who felt like a criminal caught in the manner; for, on more occasions than one, Mr. Mertoun had intimated his high disapprobation of such excursions as she was at present engaged in.

But Mordaunt was too much engaged with his own thoughts to take much notice of her delinquency. 'Have you seen my father?' he said.

'And that I have,' replied Swertha. 'The gude gentleman was ganging to hirsell himsell down Erick's Steps, whilk would have been the ending of him, that is in no way a cragsman. Sae I e'en gat him wiled away hame; and I was just seeking you that you may gang after him to the hall-house, for to my thought he is far frae weel.'

'My father unwell?' said Mordaunt, remembering the faintness he had exhibited at the commencement of that morning's walk.

'Far frae weel — far frae weel,' groaned out Swertha, with a piteous shake of the head; 'white o' the gills — white o' the gills; and him to think of coming down the riva!'

'Return home, Mordaunt,' said Norna, who was listening to what had passed. 'I will see all that is necessary done for

this man's relief, and you will find him at the Ranzelman's when you list to inquire. You cannot help him more than you already have done.'

Mordaunt felt this was true, and, commanding Swertha to follow him instantly, betook himself to the path homeward.

Swertha hobbled reluctantly after her young master in the same direction, until she lost sight of him on his entering the cleft of the rock; then instantly turned about, muttering to herself, 'Haste home, in good sooth! — haste home, and lose the best chance of getting a new rokelay and owerlay that I have had these ten years! By my certie, na. It's seldom sic rich godsende come on our shore: no since the "Jenny and James" came ashore in King Charlie's time.'

So saying, she mended her pace as well as she could, and, a willing mind making amends for frail limbs, posted on with wonderful despatch to put in for her share of the spoil. She soon reached the beach, where the Ranzelman, stuffing his own pouches all the while, was exhorting the rest 'to part things fair and be neighbourly, and to give to the auld and helpless a share of what was going, which,' he charitably remarked, 'would bring a blessing on the shore, and send them "mair wrecks ere winter."' ¹

¹ See Note 10.

CHAPTER VIII

He was a lovely youth, I guess ;
The panther in the wilderness
Was not so fair as he ;
And when he chose to sport and play,
No dolphin ever was so gay
Upon the tropic sea.

WORDSWORTH.

THE light foot of Mordaunt Mertoun was not long of bearing him to Jarlishof. He entered the house hastily, for what he himself had observed that morning corresponded in some degree with the ideas which Swertha's tale was calculated to excite. He found his father, however, in the inner apartment, reposing himself after his fatigue ; and his first question satisfied him that the good dame had practised a little imposition to get rid of them both.

'Where is this dying man, whom you have so wisely ventured your own neck to relieve ?' said the elder Mertoun to the younger.

'Norna, sir,' replied Mordaunt, 'has taken him under her charge ; she understands such matters.'

'And is quack as well as witch ?' said the elder Mertoun. 'With all my heart ; it is a trouble saved. But I hasted home, on Swertha's hint, to look out for lint and bandages ; for her speech was of broken bones.'

Mordaunt kept silence, well knowing his father would not persevere in his inquiries upon such a matter, and not willing either to prejudice the old governante or to excite his father to one of those excesses of passion into which he was apt to burst when, contrary to his wont, he thought proper to correct the conduct of his domestic.

It was late in the day ere old Swertha returned from her expedition, heartily fatigued, and bearing with her a bundle of some bulk, containing, it would seem, her share of the spoil.

Mordaunt instantly sought her out, to charge her with the deceits she had practised on both his father and himself; but the accused matron lacked not her reply.

'By her troth,' she said, 'she thought it was time to bid Mr. Mertoun gang hame and get bandages, when she had seen, with her ain twa een, Mordaunt gangin down the cliff like a wild-cat; it was to be thought broken bones would be the end, and lucky if bandages wad do any good; and, by her troth, she might weel tell Mordaunt his father was puirly, and him looking sae white in the gills, whilk, she wad die upon it, was the very word she used, and it was a thin' that couldna be denied by man at this very moment.'

'But, Swertha,' said Mordaunt, as soon as her clamorous defence gave him time to speak in reply, 'how came you, that should have been busy with your housewifery and your spinning, to be out this morning at Erick's Steps, in order to take all this unnecessary care of my father and me? And what is in that bundle, Swertha? for I fear, Swertha, you have been transgressing the law, and have been out upon the wrecking system.'

'Fair fa' your sonsy face, and the blessing of St. Ronald upon you,' said Swertha, in a tone betwixt coaxing and jesting; 'would you keep a puir body frae mending hersell, and sae muckle gear lying on the loose sand for the lifting? Hout, Maister Mordaunt, a ship ashore is a sight to wile the minister out of his very pu'pit in the middle of his preaching, muckle mair a puir auld ignorant wife frae her rock and her tow. And little did I get for my day's wark: just some rags o' cambrie things, and a bit or twa of coorse claith, and sic-like; the strong and the hearty get a' thing in this world.'

'Yes, Swertha,' replied Mertoun, 'and that is rather hard, as you must have your share of punishment in this world and the next for robbing the poor mariners.'

'Hout, callant, wha wad punish an auld wife like me for a wheen duds? Folk speak muckle black ill of Earl Patrick; but he was a freend to the shore, and made wise laws against ony body helping vessels that were like to gang on the breakers.¹ And the mariners, I have heard Bryce Jagger say, lose their right frae the time keel touches sand; and, moreover, they are dead and gane, poor souls — dead and gane, and care little about warld's wealth now. Nay, nae mair than the great jarls and sea-kings, in the Norse days, did about the treasures

¹ This was literally true.

that they buried in the tombs and sepulchres auld langsyne. Did I ever tell you the sang, Maister Mordaunt, how that Tryguarson garr'd hide five gold crowns in the same grave with him ?

'No, Swertha,' said Mordaunt, who took pleasure in tormenting the cunning old plunderer, 'you never told me that ; but I tell you, that the stranger whom Norma has taken down to the town will be well enough to-morrow to ask where you have hidden the goods that you have stolen from the wreck.'

'But wha will tell him a word about it, hinnie ?' said Swertha, looking slyly up in her young master's face. 'The mair by token, since I maun tell ye, that I have a bonny remnant of silk among the lave, that will make a dainty waistcoat to yoursell, the first merry-making ye gang to.'

Mordaunt could no longer forbear laughing at the cunning with which the old dame proposed to bribe off his evidence by imparting a portion of her plunder ; and, desiring her to get ready what provision she had made for dinner, he returned to his father, whom he found still sitting in the same place, and nearly in the same posture, in which he had left him.

When their hasty and frugal meal was finished, Mordaunt announced to his father his purpose of going down to the town, or hamlet, to look after the shipwrecked sailor.

The elder Mertoun assented with a nod.

'He must be ill accommodated there, sir,' added his son — a hint which only produced another nod of assent. 'He seemed, from his appearance,' pursued Mordaunt, 'to be of very good rank ; and admitting these poor people do their best to receive him, in his present weak state, yet —'

'I know what you would say,' said his father, interrupting him ; 'we, you think, ought to do something towards assisting him. Go to him, then ; if he lacks money, let him name the sum, and he shall have it ; but, for lodging the stranger here, and holding intercourse with him, I neither can nor will do so. I have retired to this farthest extremity of the British Isles to avoid new friends and new faces, and none such shall intrude on me either their happiness or their misery. When you have known the world half a score of years longer, your early friends will have given you reason to remember them, and to avoid new ones for the rest of your life. Go, then — why do you stop ? — rid the country of the man : let me see no one about me but those vulgar countenances, the extent and character of whose petty knavery I know, and can submit to, as to an evil

too isling to cause irritation.' He then threw his purse to his son and signed to him to depart with all speed.

Mordaunt was not long before he reached the village. In the dark abode of Neil Ronaldson, the Ranzelman, he found the stranger seated by the peat-fire, upon the very chest which had excited the cupidity of the devout Bryce Snailsfoot, the pedlar. The Ranzelman himself was absent, dividing, with all due impartiality, the spoils of the wrecked vessel amongst the natives of the community; listening to and redressing their complaints of inequality, and (if the matter in hand had not been, from beginning to end, utterly unjust and indefensible) discharging the part of a wise and prudent magistrate in all the details. For at this time, and probably until a much later period, the lower orders of the islanders entertained an opinion, common to barbarians also in the same situation, that whatever was cast on their shores became their indisputable property.

Margery Bimbister, the worthy spouse of the Ranzelman, was in the charge of the house, and introduced Mordaunt to her guest, saying, with no great ceremony, 'This is the young tacksman. You will maybe tell him your name, though you will not tell it to us. If it had not been for his four quarters, it's but little you would have said to onybody, sae lang as life lasted.'

The stranger arose and shook Mordaunt by the hand; observing, he understood that he had been the means of saving his life and his chest. 'The rest of the property,' he said, 'is, I see, walking the plank; for they are as busy as the devil in a gale of wind.'

'And what was the use of your seamanship, then,' said Margery, 'that you couldna keep off the Sumburgh Head? It would have been lang ere Sumburgh Head had come to you.'

'Leave us for a moment, good Margery Bimbister,' said Mordaunt; 'I wish to have some private conversation with this gentleman.'

'Gentleman!' said Margery, with an emphasis; 'not but the man is weel enough to look at,' she added, again surveying him, 'but I doubt if there is muckle of the gentleman about him.'

Mordaunt looked at the stranger, and was of a different opinion. He was rather above the middle size, and formed handsomely as well as strongly. Mordaunt's intercourse with society was not extensive; but he thought his new acquaintance,

to a bold, sunburnt, handsome countenance, which seemed to have faced various climates, added the frank and open manners of a sailor. He answered cheerfully the inquiries which Mordaunt made after his health; and maintained that one night's rest would relieve him from all the effects of the disaster he had sustained. But he spoke with bitterness of the avarice and curiosity of the Ranzelman and his spouse.

'That chattering old woman,' said the stranger, 'has persecuted me the whole day for the name of the ship. I think she might be contented with the share she has had of it. I was the principal owner of the vessel that was lost yonder, and they have left me nothing but my wearing apparel. Is there no magistrate, or justice of the peace, in this wild country, that would lend a hand to help one when he is among the breakers?'

Mordaunt mentioned Magnus Troil, the principal proprietor, as well as the 'fowd,' or provincial judge, of the district, as the person from whom he was most likely to obtain redress; and regretted that his own youth, and his father's situation as a retired stranger, should put it out of their power to afford him the protection he required.

'Nay, for your part, you have done enough,' said the sailor; 'but if I had five out of the forty brave fellows that are fishes' food by this time, the devil a man would I ask to do me the right that I could do for myself!'

'Forty hands!' said Mordaunt; 'you were well manned for the size of the ship.'

'Not so well as we needed to be. We mounted ten guns, besides chasers; but our cruise on the main had thinned us of men, and lumbered us up with goods. Six of our guns were in ballast. Hands! if I had had enough of hands, we would never have miscarried so infernally. The people were knocked up with working the pumps, and so took to their boats, and left me with the vessel, to sink or swim. But the dogs had their pay, and I can afford to pardon them. The boats swamped in the current — all were lost — and here am I.'

'You had come north about then, from the West Indies?'

said Mordaunt.

'Ay — ay, the vessel was the "Good Hope" of Bristol, a letter of marque. She had fine luck down on the Spanish Main, both with commerce and privateering; but the luck's ended with her now. My name's Clement Cleveland, captain, and part owner, as I said before. I am a Bristol man born; my father was

well known on the tollsell — old Clem Cleveland of the College Green.'

Mordaunt had no right to inquire farther, and yet it seemed to him as if his own mind was but half satisfied. There was an affectation of bluntness, a sort of defiance, in the manner of the stranger, for which circumstances afforded no occasion. Captain Cleveland had suffered injustice from the islanders, but from Mordaunt he had only received kindness and protection; yet he seemed as if he involved all the neighbourhood in the wrongs he complained of. Mordaunt looked down and was silent, doubting whether it would be better to take his leave or to proceed farther in his offers of assistance. Cleveland seemed to guess at his thoughts, for he immediately added, in a conciliating manner — 'I am a plain man, Master Mertoun, for that I understand is your name; and I am a ruined man to boot, and that does not mend one's good manners. But you have done a kind and friendly part by me, and it may be I think as much of it as if I thanked you more. And so before I leave this place I'll give you my fowling-piece; she will put a hundred swan-shot through a Dutchman's cap at eighty paces; she will carry ball too: I have hit a wild bull within a hundred and fifty yards; but I have two pieces that are as good or better, so you may keep this for my sake.'

'That would be to take my share of the wreck,' answered Mordaunt, laughing.

'No such matter,' said Cleveland, undoing a case which contained several guns and pistols; 'you see I have saved my private arm-chest as well as my clothes — *that* the tall old woman in the dark rigging managed for me. And, between ourselves, it is worth all I have lost; for,' he added, lowering his voice and looking round, 'when I speak of being ruined in the hearing of these land-sharks, I do not mean ruined stock and block. No, here is something will do more than shoot sea-fowl.' So saying, he pulled out a great ammunition-pouch marked swan-shot, and showed Mordaunt, hastily, that it was full of Spanish pistoles and Portagues, as the broad Portugal pieces were then called. 'No — no,' he added, with a smile, 'I have ballast enough to trim the vessel again; and now, will you take the piece?'

'Since you are willing to give it me,' said Mordaunt, laughing, 'with all my heart. I was just going to ask you, in my father's name,' he added, showing his purse, 'whether you wanted any of that same ballast.'

'Thanks, but you see I am provided. Take my old acquaintance, and may she serve you as well as she has served me; but you will never make so good a voyage with her. You can shoot, I suppose?'

'Tolerably well,' said Mordaunt, admiring the piece, which was a beautiful Spanish-barrelled gun, inlaid with gold, small in the bore, and of unusual length, such as is chiefly used for shooting sea-fowl and for ball-practice.

'With slugs,' continued the donor, 'never gun shot closer; and with single ball you may kill a seal two hundred yards at sea from the top of the highest peak of this iron-bound coast of yours. But I tell you again, that the old rattler will never do you the service she has done me.'

'I shall not use her so dexterously, perhaps?' said Mordaunt.

'Umph! perhaps not,' replied Cleveland; 'but that is not the question. What say you to shooting the man at the wheel, just as we run aboard of a Spaniard? So the Don was taken aback, and we laid him athwart the hawse, and carried her cutlass in hand; and worth the while she was — stout brigantine — "El Santo Francisco" — bound for Porto Bello, with gold and negroes. That little bit of lead was worth twenty thousand pistoles.'

'I have shot at no such game as yet,' said Mordaunt.

'Well, all in good time; we cannot weigh till the tide makes. But you are a tight, handsome, active young man. What is to ail you to take a trip after some of this stuff?' laying his hand on the bag of gold.

'My father talks of my travelling soon,' replied Mordaunt, who, born to hold men-of-war's-men in great respect, felt flattered by this invitation from one who appeared a thoroughbred seaman.

'I respect him for the thought,' said the captain, 'and I will visit him before I weigh anchor. I have a consort off these islands, and be cursed to her. She'll find me out somewhere, though she parted company in the bit of a squall, unless she is gone to Davy Jones too. Well, she was better found than we, and not so deep loaded: she must have weathered it. We'll have a hammock slung for you aboard, and make a sailor and a man of you in the same trip.'

'I should like it well enough,' said Mordaunt, who eagerly longed to see more of the world than his lonely situation had hitherto permitted; 'but then my father must decide.'

'Your father! pooh!' said Captain Cleveland; 'but you are

very right,' he added, checking himself. 'Gad, I have lived so long at sea that I cannot imagine anybody has a right to think except the captain and the master. But you are very right. I will go up to the old gentleman this instant and speak to him myself. He lives in that handsome, modern-looking building, I suppose, that I see a quarter of a mile off?'

'In that old half-ruined house,' said Mordaunt, 'he does indeed live; but he will see no visitors.'

'Then you must drive the point yourself, for I can't stay in this latitude. Since your father is no magistrate, I must go to see this same Magnus — how call you him? — who is not justice of peace, but something else that will do the turn as well. These fellows have got two or three things that I must and will have back; let them keep the rest, and be d—d to them. Will you give me a letter to him, just by way of commission?'

'It is scarce needful,' said Mordaunt. 'It is enough that you are shipwrecked and need his help; but yet I may as well furnish you with a letter of introduction.'

'There,' said the sailor, producing a writing-case from his chest, 'are your writing-tools. Meantime, since bulk has been broken, I will nail down the hatches and make sure of the cargo.'

While Mordaunt, accordingly, was engaged in writing to Magnus Troil a letter, setting forth the circumstances in which Captain Cleveland had been thrown upon their coast, the captain, having first selected and laid aside some wearing apparel and necessaries enough to fill a knapsack, took in hand hammer and nails, employed himself in securing the lid of his sea-chest by fastening it down in a workman-like manner, and then added the corroborating security of a cord, twisted and knotted with nautical dexterity. 'I leave this in your charge,' he said, 'all except this,' showing the bag of gold, 'and these,' pointing to a cutlass and pistols, 'which may prevent all further risk of my parting company with my Portagues.'

'You will find no occasion for weapons in this country, Captain Cleveland,' replied Mordaunt: 'a child might travel with a purse of gold from Sumburgh Head to the Scaw of Unst, and no soul would injure him.'

'And that's pretty boldly said, young gentleman, considering what is going on without doors at this moment.'

'Oh,' replied Mordaunt, a little confused, 'what comes on land with the tide they reckon their lawful property. One

would think they had studied under Sir Arthegal, who pronounces —

For equal right in equal things doth stand,
And what the mighty sea hath once possess'd,
And plucked quite from all possessors' hands,
Or else by wrecks that wretches have distress'd,
He may dispose, by his resistless might,
As things at random left, to whom he list.'

'I shall think the better of plays and ballads as long as I live for these very words,' said Captain Cleveland; 'and yet I have loved them well enough in my day. But this is good doctrine, and more men than one may trim their sails to such a breeze. What the sea sends is ours, that's sure enough. However, in case that your good folks should think the land as well as the sea may present them with waifs and strays, I will make bold to take my cutlass and pistols. Will you cause my chest to be secured in your own house till you hear from me, and use your influence to procure me a guide to show me the way, and to carry my kit?'

'Will you go by sea or land?' said Mordant, in reply.

'By sea!' exclaimed Cleveland. 'What, in one of these cockle-shells, and a cracked cockle-shell to boot? No — no; land — land, unless I knew my crew, my vessel, and my voyage.'

They parted accordingly, Captain Cleveland being supplied with a guide to conduct him to Burgh-Westra, and his chest being carefully removed to the mansion-house at Jarlshof.

CHAPTER IX

This is a gentle trader, and a prudent.
He's no Autolycus, to blear your eye
With quips of worldly gauds and gamesomeness ;
But seasons all his glittering merchandise
With wholesome doctrines, suited to the use,
As men sauce goose with sage and rosemary.

Old Play.

ON the subsequent morning, Mordaunt, in answer to his father's inquiries, began to give him some account of the shipwrecked mariner whom he had rescued from the waves. But he had not proceeded far in recapitulating the particulars which Cleveland had communicated, when Mr. Mertoun's looks became disturbed ; he arose hastily, and, after pacing twice or thrice across the room, he retired into the inner chamber, to which he usually confined himself while under the influence of his mental malady. In the evening he reappeared, without any traces of his disorder ; but it may be easily supposed that his son avoided recurring to the subject which had affected him.

Mordaunt Mertoun was thus left without assistance to form at his leisure his own opinion respecting the new acquaintance which the sea had sent him ; and, upon the whole, he was himself surprised to find the result less favourable to the stranger than he could well account for. There seemed to Mordaunt to be a sort of repelling influence about the man. True, he was a handsome man, of a frank and prepossessing manner, but there was an assumption of superiority about him which Mordaunt did not quite so much like. Although he was so keen a sportsman as to be delighted with his acquisition of the Spanish-barrelled gun, and accordingly mounted and dismounted it with great interest, paying the utmost attention to the most minute parts about the lock and ornaments, yet he was, upon the whole, inclined to have some scruples about the mode in which he had acquired it.

'I should not have accepted it,' he thought; 'perhaps Captain Cleveland might give it to me as a sort of payment for the trifling service I did him; and yet it would have been churlish to refuse it in the way it was offered. I wish he had looked more like a man whom one would have chosen to be obliged to.'

But a successful day's shooting reconciled him to his gun, and he became assured, like most young sportsmen in similar circumstances, that all other pieces were but pop-guns in comparison. But then, to be doomed to shoot gulls and seals, when there were Frenchmen and Spaniards to be come at, when there were ships to be boarded, and steersmen to be marked off, seemed but a dull and contemptible destiny. His father had mentioned his leaving these islands, and no other mode of occupation occurred to his inexperience save that of the sea, with which he had been conversant from his infancy. His ambition had formerly aimed no higher than at sharing the fatigues and dangers of a Greenland fishing expedition; for it was in that scene that the Zetlanders laid most of their perilous adventures. But war was again raging, the history of Sir Francis Drake, Captain Morgan, and other bold adventurers, an account of whose exploits he had purchased from Byrce Snailsfoot, had made much impression on his mind, and the offer of Captain Cleveland to take him to sea frequently recurred to him, although the pleasure of such a project was somewhat damped by a doubt whether, in the long run, he should not find many objections to his proposed commander. Thus much he already saw, that he was opinionative, and might probably prove arbitrary; and that, since even kindness was mingled with an assumption of superiority, his occasional displeasure might contain a great deal more of that disagreeable ingredient than could be palatable to those who sailed under him. And yet, after counting all risks, could his father's consent but be obtained, with what pleasure, he thought, would he embark in quest of new scenes and strange adventures, in which he proposed to himself to achieve such deeds as should be the theme of many a tale to the lovely sisters of Burgh Westra — tales at which Minna should weep and Brenda should smile, and both should marvel! And this was to be the reward of his labours and his dangers; for the hearth of Magnus Troil had a magnetic influence over his thoughts, and however they might traverse amid his day-dreams, it was the point where they finally settled.

There were times when Mordaunt thought of mentioning to his father the conversation he had held with Captain Cleveland and the seaman's proposal to him ; but the very short and general account which he had given of that person's history, upon the morning after his departure from the hamlet, had produced a sinister effect on Mr. Mertoun's mind, and discouraged him from speaking farther on any subject connected with it. It would be time enough, he thought, to mention Captain Cleveland's proposal when his consort should arrive, and when he should repeat his offer in a more formal manner ; and these he supposed events likely very soon to happen.

But days grew to weeks, and weeks were numbered into months, and he heard nothing from Cleveland ; and only learned by an occasional visit from Bryce Snailsfoot that the captain was residing at Burgh-Westra as one of the family. Mordaunt was somewhat surprised at this, although the unlimited hospitality of the islands, which Magnus Troil, both from fortune and disposition, carried to the utmost extent, made it almost a matter of course that he should remain in the family until he disposed of himself otherwise. Still it seemed strange he had not gone to some of the northern isles to inquire after his consort ; or that he did not rather choose to make Lerwick his residence, where fishing-vessels often brought news from the coasts and ports of Scotland and Holland. Again, why did he not send for the chest he had deposited at Jarlishof ? and still farther, Mordaunt thought it would have been but polite if the stranger had sent him some sort of message in token of remembrance.

These subjects of reflection were connected with another still more unpleasant, and more difficult to account for. Until the arrival of this person, scarce a week had passed without bringing him some kind greeting or token of recollection from Burgh-Westra ; and pretences were scarce ever wanting for maintaining a constant intercourse. Minna wanted the words of a Norse ballad ; or desired to have, for her various collections, feathers, or eggs, or shells, or specimens of the rarer sea-weeds ; or Brenda sent a riddle to be resolved, or a song to be learned ; or the honest old Udaller — in a rude manuscript, which might have passed for an ancient Runic inscription — sent his hearty greetings to his good young friend with a present of something to make good cheer, and an earnest request he would come to Burgh-Westra as soon, and stay there as long, as possible. These kindly tokens of remembrance were often sent by special

message; besides which, there was never a passenger or a traveller who crossed from the one mansion to the other who did not bring to Mordaunt some friendly greeting from the Udaller and his family. Of late, this intercourse had become more and more infrequent; and no messenger from Burgh-Westra had visited Jarlshof for several weeks. Mordaunt both observed and felt this alteration, and it dwelt on his mind, while he questioned Bryce as closely as pride and prudence would permit, to ascertain, if possible, the cause of the change. Yet he endeavoured to assume an indifferent air while he asked the jagger whether there were no news in the country.

'Great news,' the jagger replied; 'and a gay mony of them. That crack-brained carle, the new factor, is for making a change in the "bismars" and the "lispunds";¹ and our worthy fowl, Magnus Troil, has sworn that, sooner than change them for the still-yard, or aught else, he'll fling Factor Yellowley from Brassa Craig.'

'Is that all?' said Mordaunt, very little interested.

'All! and eneugh, I think,' replied the pedlar. 'How are folks to buy and sell, if the weights are changed on them?'

'Very true,' replied Mordaunt; 'but have you heard of no strange vessels on the coast?'

'Six Dutch doggers off Brassa; and, as I hear, a high-quartered galliot thing, with a gaff mainsail, lying in Scalloway Bay. She will be from Norway.'

'No ships of war, or sloops?'

'None,' replied the pedlar, 'since the "Kite" tender sailed with the impress men. If it was His will, and our men were out of her, I wish the deep sea had her!'

'Were there no news at Burgh-Westra? Were the family all well?'

'A' weel, and weel to do, out-taken, it may be, something ower muckle daffing and laughing: dancing ilk night, they say, wi' the stranger captain that's living there — him that was ashore on Sumburgh Head the tother day; less daffing served him then.'

'Daffing! dancing every night!' said Mordaunt, not particularly well satisfied. 'Whom does Captain Cleveland dance with?'

'Ony body he likes, I fancy,' said the jagger; 'at ony rate, he gars a' body yonder dance after his fiddle. But I ken little about it, for I am no free in conscience to look upon thae flinging fancies. Folk should mind that life is made but of rotten yarn.'

¹ These are weights of Norwegian origin, still used in Zetland.

'I fancy that it is to keep them in mind of that wholesome truth that you deal in such tender wares, Bryce,' replied Mordaunt, dissatisfied as well with the tenor of the reply as with the affected scruples of the respondent.

'That's as muckle as to say, that I suld hae minded you was a flinger and a fiddler yoursell, Maister Mordaunt; but I am an auld man, and maun unburden my conscience. But ye will be for the dance, I sall warrant, that's to be at Burgh-Westra on John's Even — *Saunt John's*, as the blinded creatures ca' him — and nae doubt ye will be for some warldly braws — hose, waistcoats, or sic-like? I hae pieces frae Flanders.' With that he placed his movable warehouse on the table, and began to unlock it.

'Dance!' repeated Mordaunt — 'dance on St. John's Even? Were you desired to bid me to it, Bryce?'

'Na; but ye ken weel enough ye wad be welcome, bidden or no bidden. This captain — how ca' ye him? — is to be skudler, as they ca't — the first of the gang, like.'

'The devil take him!' said Mordaunt, in impatient surprise.

'A' in gude time,' replied the jagger; 'hurry no man's cattle; the devil will hae his due, I warrant ye, or it winna be for lack of seeking. But it's true I'm telling you, for a' ye stare like a wild cat; and this same captain — I watna his name — bought ane of the very waistcoats that I am ganging to show ye — purple, wi' a gowd binding, and bonnily broidered; and I have a piece for you, the neighbour of it, wi' a green grund; and if ye mean to streek yoursell up beside him, ye maun e'en buy it, for it's gowd that glances in the lasses' een nowadays. See — look till 't,' he added, displaying the pattern in various points of view — 'look till *it* through the light and till the light through *it*, *wi'* the grain and *against* the grain: it shows ony gate; cam frae Antwerp a' the gate. Four dollars is the price; and yon captain was sae weel pleased that he flang down a twenty shilling Jacobus, and bade me keep the change and be d—d! Poor silly profane creature, I pity him.'

Without inquiring whether the pedlar bestowed his compassion on the worldly imprudence or the religious deficiencies of Captain Cleveland, Mordaunt turned from him, folded his arms, and paced the apartment, muttering to himself, 'Not asked. A stranger to be king of the feast!' Words which he repeated so earnestly that Bryce caught a part of their import.

'As for asking, I am almaist bauld to say that ye will be asked, Maister Mordaunt.'

'Did they mention my name, then?' said Mordaunt.

'I canna preceesely say that,' said Bryce Snailsfoot; 'but ye needna turn away your head sae sourly, like a sealgh when he leaves the shore; for, do you see, I heard distinctly that a' the revellers about are to be there; and is't to be thought they would leave out you, an auld kend freend, and the lightest foot at sic frolics — Heaven send you a better praise in His ain gude time! — that ever flang at a fiddle-squeak, between this and Unst? Sae I consider ye altogether the same as invited; and ye had best provide yourself wi' a waistcoat, for brave and brisk will every man be that's there — the Lord pity them!'

He thus continued to follow with his green glazen eyes the motions of young Mordaunt Mertoun, who was pacing the room in a very pensive manner, which the jagger probably misinterpreted, as he thought, like Claudio, that, if a man is sad, it must needs be because he lacks money. Bryce, therefore, after another pause, thus accosted him — 'Ye needna be sad about the matter, Maister Mordaunt; for although I got the just price of the article from the captain-man, yet I maun deal freendly wi' you, as a kend freend and customer, and bring the price, as they say, within your purse-mouth; or it's the same to me to let it lie ower till Martinmas, or e'en to Candlemas. I am decent in the world, Maister Mordaunt; forbid that I should hurry ony body, far mair a freend that has paid me siller afore now. Or I wad be content to swap the garment for the value in feathers or sea-otters' skins, or ony kind of peltrie; nane kens better than yoursell how to come by sic ware, and I am sure I hae furnished you wi' the primest o' powder. I diana ken if I tell'd ye it was out o' the kist of Captain Plunket, that perished on the Seaw of Unst, wi' the armed brig "Mary," sax years syne. He was a prime fowler himself, and luck it was that the kist came ashore dry. I sell that to nane but gude marksmen. And so, I was saying, if ye had ony wares ye liked to coup¹ for the waistcoat, I wad be ready to trock wi' you, for assuredly ye will be wanted at Burgh-Westra on St. John's Even; and ye wadna like to look waur than the captain — that wadna be setting.'

'I will be there at least, whether wanted or not,' said Mordaunt, stopping short in his walk, and taking the waistcoat-piece hastily out of the pedlar's hand; 'and, as you say, will not disgrace them.'

'Haud a care — haud a care, Maister Mordaunt,' exclaimed the pedlar; 'ye handle it as it were a bale of coarse wadmal:

¹ Barter.

ye'll fray't to bits; ye might weel say my ware is tender; and ye'll mind the price is four dollars. Sall I put ye in my book for it?' 'No,' said Mordaunt, hastily; and, taking out his purse, he flung down the money.

'Grace to ye to wear the garment,' said the joyous pedlar, 'and to me to guide the siller; and protect us from earthly vanities and earthly covetousness; and send you the white linen raiment, whilk is mair to be desired than the muslins, and cambrics, and lawns, and silks of this world; and send me the talents which avail more than much fine Spanish gold, or Dutch dollars either; and — but God guide the callant, what for is he wrapping the silk up that gate, like a wisp of hay?'

At this moment, old Swertha, the housekeeper, entered, to whom, as if eager to get rid of the subject, Mordaunt threw his purchase, with something like careless disdain; and, telling her to put it aside, snatched his gun, which stood in the corner, threw his shooting accoutrements about him, and, without noticing Bryce's attempt to enter into conversation upon the 'braw seal-skin, as saft as doe-leather,' which made the sling and cover of his fowling-piece, he left the apartment abruptly.

The jagger, with those green, goggling, and gain-desecrying kind of optics which we have already described, continued gazing for an instant after the customer who treated his wares with such irreverence.

Swertha also looked after him with some surprise. 'The callant's in a creel,' quoth she.

'In a creel!' echoed the pedlar; 'he will be as wowf as ever his father was. To guide in that gate a bargain that cost him four dollars! — very, very fifish, as the east-country fisher-folk say.'

'Four dollars for that green rag!' said Swertha, catching at the words which the jagger had unwarily suffered to escape: 'that was a bargain indeed! I wonder whether he is the greater fule or you the mair rogue, Bryce Snailsfoot.'

'I didna say it cost him preecesely four dollars,' said Snailsfoot; 'but if it had, the lad's siller's his ain, I hope; and he is auld enough to make his ain bargains. Mair by token, the gudes are weel worth the money and mair.'

'Mair by token,' said Swertha, coolly, 'I will see what his father thinks about it.'

'Ye'll no be sae ill-natured, Mistress Swertha,' said the jagger; 'that will be but cauld thanks for the bonny owerlay that I hae brought you a' the way frae Lerwick.'

'And a bonny price ye'll be settin on 't,' said Swertha, 'for that's the gate your good deeds end.'

'Ye sall hae the fixing of the price yoursell; or it may lie ower till ye're buying something for the house or for your master, and it can make a' ae count.'

'Troth, and that's true, Bryce Snailsfoot; I am thinking we'll want some napery sune; for it's no to be thought we can spin, and the like, as if there was a mistress in the house; and sue we make nane at hame.'

'And that's what I ca' walking by the Word,' said the jagger. '“Go unto those that buy and sell”; there's muckle profit in that text.'

'There's a pleasure in dealing with a discreet man, that can make profit of ony thing,' said Swertha; 'and now that I take another look at that daft callant's waistcoat-piece, I think it is honestly worth four dollara.'

CHAPTER X

I have possessed the regulation of the weather and the distribution of the seasons. The sun has listened to my dictates, and passed from tropic to tropic by my direction; the clouds, at my command, have poured forth their waters.

Rasselas.

A NY sudden cause for anxious and mortifying reflection, which, in advanced age, occasions sullen and pensive inactivity, stimulates youth to eager and active exertion; as if, like the hurt deer, they endeavoured to drown the pain of the shaft by the rapidity of motion. When Mordaunt caught up his gun and rushed out of the house of Jarls-hof, he walked on with great activity over waste and wild, without any determined purpose, except that of escaping, if possible, from the smart of his own irritation. His pride was effectually mortified by the report of the jagger, which coincided exactly with some doubts he had been led to entertain, by the long and unkind silence of his friends at Burgh-Westra.

If the fortunes of Cæsar had doomed him, as the poet suggests, to have been

But the best wrestler on the green,

it is, nevertheless, to be presumed that a foil from a rival in that rustic exercise would have mortified him as much as a defeat from a competitor when he was struggling for the empery of the world. And even so Mordaunt Mertoun, degraded in his own eyes from the height which he had occupied as the chief amongst the youth of the island, felt vexed and irritated, as well as humbled. The two beautiful sisters, also, whose smiles all were so desirous of acquiring, with whom he had lived on terms of such familiar affection that, with the same ease and innocence, there was unconsciously mixed a shade of deeper though undefined tenderness than characterises fraternal love — they also seemed to have forgotten him. He could not be ignorant that, in the universal opinion of all Dunrossness,

nay, of the whole Mainland, he might have had every chance of being the favoured lover of either; and now at once, and without any failure on his part, he was become so little to them that he had lost even the consequence of an ordinary acquaintance. The old Udaller, too, whose hearty and sincere character should have made him more constant in his friendships, seemed to have been as fickle as his daughters, and poor Mordaunt had at once lost the smiles of the fair and the favour of the powerful. These were uncomfortable reflections, and he doubled his pace, that he might outstrip them if possible.

Without exactly reflecting upon the route which he pursued, Mordaunt walked briskly on through a country where neither hedge, wall, nor inclosure of any kind interrupts the steps of the wanderer, until he reached a very solitary spot, where, embosomed among steep heathy hills, which sunk suddenly down on the verge of the water, lay one of those small fresh-water lakes which are common in the Zetland Isles, whose outlets form the sources of the small brooks and rivulets by which the country is watered, and serve to drive the little mills which manufacture their grain.

It was a mild summer day; the beams of the sun, as is not uncommon in Zetland, were moderated and shaded by a silvery haze, which filled the atmosphere, and, destroying the strong contrast of light and shade, gave even to noon the sober livery of the evening twilight. The little lake, not three-quarters of a mile in circuit, lay in profound quiet; its surface undimpled, save when one of the numerous water-fowl which glided on its surface dived for an instant under it. The depth of the water gave the whole that cerulean tint of bluish green which occasioned its being called the Green Loch; and at present it formed so perfect a mirror to the bleak hills by which it was surrounded, and which lay reflected in its bosom, that it was difficult to distinguish the water from the land; nay, in the shadowy uncertainty occasioned by the thin haze, a stranger could scarce have been sensible that a sheet of water lay before him. A scene of more complete solitude, having all its peculiarities heightened by the extreme serenity of the weather, the quiet, grey, composed tone of the atmosphere, and the perfect silence of the elements, could hardly be imagined. The very aquatic birds, who frequented the spot in great numbers, forbore their usual flight and screams, and floated in profound tranquillity upon the silent water.

Without taking any determined aim, without having any

determined purpose, almost without thinking what he was about, Mordaunt presented his fowling-piece and fired across the lake. The large swan-shot dimpled its surface like a partial shower of hail; the hills took up the noise of the report, and repeated it again, and again, and again, to all their echoes; the water-fowl took to wing in eddying and confused wheel, answering the echoes with a thousand varying screams, from the deep note of the swabie, or swartback, to the querulous cry of the turrack and kittiwake.

Mordaunt looked for a moment on the clamorous crowd with a feeling of resentment, which he felt disposed at the moment to apply to all nature, and all her objects, animate or inanimate, however little concerned with the cause of his internal mortification.

'Ay — ay,' he said, 'wheel, dive, scream, and clamour as you will, and all because you have seen a strange sight and heard an unusual sound. There is many a one like you in this round world. But you, at least, shall learn,' he added, as he reloaded his gun, 'that strange sights and strange sounds, ay, and strange acquaintances to boot, have sometimes a little shade of danger connected with them. But why should I wreak my own vexation on these harmless sea-gulls?' he subjoined, after a moment's pause; 'they have nothing to do with the friends that have forgotten me. I loved them all so well, — and to be so soon given up for the first stranger whom chance threw on the coast!'

As he stood resting upon his gun, and abandoning his mind to the course of these unpleasant reflections, his meditations were unexpectedly interrupted by some one touching his shoulder. He looked around, and saw Norna of the Fitful Head, wrapped in her dark and ample mantle. She had seen him from the brow of the hill, and had descended to the lake through a small ravine which concealed her, until she came with noiseless step so close to him that he turned round at her touch.

Mordaunt Mertoun was by nature neither timorous nor credulous, and a course of reading more extensive than usual had, in some degree, fortified his mind against the attacks of superstition; but he would have been an actual prodigy if, living in Zetland in the end of the 17th century, he had possessed the philosophy which did not exist in Scotland generally until at least two generations later. He doubted in his own mind the extent, nay, the very existence, of Norna's super-

natural attributes, which was a high flight of incredulity in the country where they were universally received ; but still his incredulity went no farther than doubts. She was unquestionably an extraordinary woman, gifted with an energy above others, acting upon motives peculiar to herself, and apparently independent of mere earthly considerations. Impressed with these ideas, which he had imbibed from his youth, it was not without something like alarm that he beheld this mysterious female standing on a sudden so close beside him, and looking upon him with such sad and severe eyes, as those with which the Fatal Virgins, who, according to Northern mythology, were called the Valkyriur, or 'Choosers of the Slain,' were supposed to regard the young champions whom they selected to share the banquet of Odin.

It was, indeed, reckoned unlucky, to say the least, to meet with Norna suddenly alone, and in a place remote from witnesses ; and she was supposed, on such occasions, to have been usually a prophetess of evil, as well as an omen of misfortune, to those who had such a rencontre. There were few or none of the islanders, however familiarised with her occasional appearance in society, that would not have trembled to meet her on the solitary banks of the Green Loch.

'I bring you no evil, Mordaunt Mertoun,' she said, reading perhaps something of this superstitious feeling in the looks of the young man. 'Evil from me you never felt, and never will.'

'Nor do I fear any,' said Mordaunt, exerting himself to throw aside an apprehension which he felt to be unmanly. 'Why should I, mother ? You have been ever my friend.'

'Yet, Mordaunt, thou art not of our region ; but to none of Zetland blood, no, not even to those who sit around the hearthstone of Magnus Troil, the noble descendants of the ancient jarls of Orkney, am I more a well-wisher than I am to thee, thou kind and brave-hearted boy. When I hung around thy neck that gifted chain, which all in our isles know was wrought by no earthly artist, but by the Drows,¹ in the secret recesses of their caverns, thou wert then but fifteen years old ; yet thy foot had been on the Maiden Skerrie of Northmaven, known before but to the webbed sole of the swartback, and thy skiff had been in the deepest cavern of Brinnastir, where the "haaf fish"² had before slumbered in dark obscurity. Therefore I

¹ See Note 17.

² The larger seal, or sea-calf, which seeks the most solitary recesses for its abode. See Dr. Edmonstone's *Zetland*, vol. II. p. 294.

gave thee that noble gift; and well thou knowest that, since that day, every eye in these isles has looked on thee as a son or as a brother, endowed beyond other youths, and the favoured of those whose hour of power is when the night meets with the day.'

'Alas! mother,' said Mordaunt, 'your kind gift may have given me favour, but it has not been able to keep it for me, or I have not been able to keep it for myself. What matters it? I shall learn to set as little by others as they do by me. My father says that I shall soon leave these islands, and therefore, Mother Norna, I will return to you your fairy gift, that it may bring more lasting luck to some other than it has done to me.'

'Despise not the gift of the nameless race,' said Norna, frowning; then suddenly changing her tone of displeasure to that of mournful solemnity, she added, 'Despise them not; but, O Mordaunt, court them not! Sit down on that grey stone; thou art the son of my adoption, and I will doff, as far as I may, those attributes that sever me from the common mass of humanity, and speak with you as a parent with a child.'

There was a tremulous tone of grief which mingled with the loftiness of her language and carriage, and was calculated to excite sympathy, as well as to attract attention. Mordaunt sat down on the rock which she pointed out -- a fragment which, with many others that lay scattered around, had been torn by some winter storm from the precipice at the foot of which it lay, upon the very verge of the water. Norna took her own

place on a stone at about three feet distance, adjusted her position so that little more than her forehead, her eyes, and a single lock of her grey hair were seen from beneath the shade of her dark wadmaal cloak, and then proceeded in a tone in which the imaginary consequence and importance so often assumed by lunacy seemed to contend against the deep workings of some extraordinary and deeply-rooted mental affliction.

'I was not always,' she said, 'that which I now am. I was not always the wise, the powerful, the commanding, before whom the young stand abashed and the old uncover their grey heads. There was a time when my appearance did not silence mirth, when I sympathised with human passion, and had my own share in human joy or sorrow. It was a time of helplessness -- it was a time of folly -- it was a time of idle and unfruitful laughter -- it was a time of causeless and senseless tears; and yet, with its follies, and its sorrows, and its weaknesses, what would Norna of Fitful Head give to be again the unmarked

and happy maiden that she was in her early days! Hear me, Mordaunt, and bear with me; for you hear me utter complaints which have never sounded in mortal ears, and which in mortal ears shall never sound again. I will be what I ought,' she continued, starting up and extending her lean and withered arm, 'the queen and protectress of these wild and neglected isles; I will be her whose foot the wave wets not, save by her permission, ay, even though its rage be at its wildest madness: whose robe the whirlwind respects, when it rends the house-rigging from the roof-tree. Bear me witness, Mordaunt Mertoun: you heard my words at Harfra—you saw the tempest sink before them! Speak, bear me witness!'

To have contradicted her in this strain of high-toned enthusiasm would have been cruel and unavailing, even had Mordaunt been more decidedly convinced than he was that an insane woman, not one of supernatural power, stood before him.

'I heard you sing,' he replied, 'and I saw the tempest abate.'

'Abate!' exclaimed Norna, striking the ground impatiently with her staff of black oak; 'thou speakest it but half: it sunk at once—sunk in shorter space than the child that is hushed to silence by the nurse. Enough, you know my power: but you know not—mortal man knows not, and never shall know—the price which I paid to attain it. No, Mordaunt, never for the widest sway that the ancient Norsemen boasted, when their banners waved victorious from Bergen to Palestine—never, for all that the round world contains, do thou barter thy peace of mind for such greatness as Norna's.' She resumed her seat upon the rock, drew the mantle over her face, rested her head upon her hands, and, by the convulsive motion which agitated her bosom, appeared to be weeping bitterly.

'Good Norna,' said Mordaunt, and paused, scarce knowing what to say that might console the unhappy woman—'good Norna,' he again resumed, 'if there be aught in your mind that troubles it, were you not best to go to the worthy minister at Dunrossness? Men say you have not for many years been in a Christian congregation: that cannot be well, or right. You are yourself well known as a healer of bodily disease; but when the mind is sick, we should draw to the Physician of our souls.'

Norna had raised her person slowly from the stooping posture in which she sat; but at length she started up on her feet, threw back her mantle, extended her arm, and while her lip foamed and her eye sparkled, exclaimed in a tone resembling

a scream — 'Me did you speak — me did you bid seek out a priest! Would you kill the good man with horror? Me in a Christian congregation! Would you have the roof to fall on the sacred assembly, and mingle their blood with their worship? — I seek to the good Physician! Would you have the fiend claim his prey openly before God and man?'

The extreme agitation of the unhappy speaker naturally led Mordaunt to the conclusion which was generally adopted and accredited in that superstitious country and period. 'Wretched woman,' he said, 'if indeed thou hast leagued thyself with the Powers of Evil, why should you not seek even yet for repentance? But do as thou wilt, I cannot, dare not, as a Christian, abide longer with you; and take again your gift,' he said, offering back the chain. 'Good can never come of it, if indeed evil hath not come already.'

'Be still and hear me, thou foolish boy,' said Norna, calmly, as if she had been restored to reason by the alarm and horror which she perceived in Mordaunt's countenance — 'hear me, I say. I am not of those who have leagued themselves with the Enemy of Mankind, or derive skill or power from his ministry. And although the unearthly powers *were* propitiated by a sacrifice which human tongue can never utter, yet, God knows, my guilt in that offering was no more than that of the blind man who falls from the precipice which he could neither see nor shun. Oh, leave me not — shun me not — in this hour of weakness! Remain with me till the temptation be passed, or I will plunge myself into that lake, and rid myself at once of my power and my wretchedness!'

Mordaunt, who had always looked up to this singular woman with a sort of affection, occasioned no doubt by the early kindness and distinction which she had shown to him, was readily induced to resume his seat and listen to what she had further to say, in hopes that she would gradually overcome the violence of her agitation. It was not long ere she seemed to have gained the victory her companion expected, for she addressed him in her usual steady and authoritative manner.

'It was not of myself, Mordaunt, that I purposed to speak, when I beheld you from the summit of yonder grey rock, and came down the path to meet with you. My fortunes are fixed beyond change, be it for weal or for woe. For myself I have ceased to feel much; but for those whom she loves Norna of the Fitful Head has still those feelings which link her to her kind. Mark me. There is an eagle, the noblest that builds

in these airy precipices, and into that eagle's nest there has crept an adder; wilt thou lend thy aid to crush the reptile, and to save the noble brood of the lord of the north sky?

'You must speak more plainly, Norna,' said Mordaunt, 'if you would have me understand or answer you. I am no guesser of riddles.'

'In plain language, then, you know well the family of Burgh-Westra — the lovely daughters of the generous old U'daller, Magnus Troil — Minna and Brenda, I mean? You know them, and you love them?'

'I have known them, mother,' replied Mordaunt, 'and I have loved them — none knows it better than yourself.'

'To know them once,' said Norna, emphatically, 'is to know them always. To love them once is to love them for ever.'

'To have loved them once is to wish them well for ever,' replied the youth; 'but it is nothing more. To be plain with you, Norna, the family at Burgh-Westra have of late totally neglected me. But show me the means of serving them, I will convince you how much I have remembered old kindness, how little I resent late coldness.'

'It is well spoken, and I will put your purpose to the proof,' replied Norna. 'Magnus Troil has taken a serpent into his bosom: his lovely daughters are delivered up to the machinations of a villain.'

'You mean the stranger, Cleveland?' said Mordaunt.

'The stranger who so calls himself,' replied Norna — 'the same whom we found flung ashore, like a waste heap of sea-weed, at the foot of the Sumburgh Cape. I felt that within me that would have prompted me to let him lie till the tide floated him off, as it had floated him on shore. I repent me I gave not way to it.'

'But,' said Mordaunt, 'I cannot repent that I did my duty as a Christian man. And what right have I to wish otherwise? If Minna, Brenda, Magnus, and the rest like that stranger better than me, I have no title to be offended; nay, I might well be laughed at for bringing myself into comparison.'

'It is well, and I trust they merit thy unselfish friendship.'

'But I cannot perceive,' said Mordaunt, 'in what you can propose that I should serve them. I have but just learned by Bryce, the jagger, that this Captain Cleveland is all in all with the ladies at Burgh-Westra and with the U'daller himself. I would like ill to intrude myself where I am not welcome, or to place my home-bred merit in comparison with

Captain Cleveland's. He can tell them of battles, when I can only speak of birds' nests; can speak of shooting Frenchmen, when I can only tell of shooting seals; he wears gay clothes and bears a brave countenance, I am plainly dressed and plainly nurtured. Such gay gallants as he can noose the hearts of those he lives with, as the fowler nooses the guillemot with his rod and line.'

'You do wrong to yourself,' replied Norna — 'wrong to yourself, and greater wrong to Minna and Brenda. And trust not the reports of Bryce: he is like the greedy chaffer-whale, that will change his course and dive for the most petty coin which a fisher can cast at him. Certain it is that, if you have been lessened in the opinion of Magnus Troil, that sordid fellow hath had some share in it. But let him count his vantage, for my eye is upon him.'

'And why, mother,' said Mordaunt, 'do you not tell to Magnus what you have told to me?'

'Because,' replied Norna, 'they who wax wise in their own conceit must be taught a bitter lesson by experience. It was but yesterday that I spoke with Magnus, and what was his reply? — "Good Norna, you grow old." And this was spoken by one bounden to me by so many and such close ties — by the descendant of the ancient Norse earls — this was from Magnus Troil to me; and it was said in behalf of one whom the sea flung forth as wreck-weed! Since he despises the counsel of the aged, he shall be taught by that of the young; and well that he is not left to his own folly. Go, therefore, to Burgh-Westra, as usual, upon the Baptist's festival.'

'I have had no invitation,' said Mordaunt: 'I am not wanted, not wished for, not thought of — perhaps I shall not be acknowledged if I go thither; and yet, mother, to confess the truth, thither I had thought to go.'

'It was a good thought, and to be cherished,' replied Norna; 'we seek our friends when they are sick in health, why not when they are sick in mind and surfeited with prosperity? Do not fail to go; it may be, we shall meet there. Meanwhile our roads lie different. Farewell, and speak not of this meeting.'

They parted, and Mordaunt remained standing by the lake, with his eyes fixed on Norna, until her tall dark form became invisible among the windings of the valley down which she wandered, and Mordaunt returned to his father's mansion, determined to follow counsel which coincided so well with his own wishes.

CHAPTER XI

All your ancient customs
And long-descended usages I'll change.
Ye shall not eat, nor drink, nor speak, nor move,
Think, look, or walk, as ye were wont to do.
Even your marriage-beds shall know mutation :
The bride shall have the stock, the groom the wall ;
For all old practice will I turn and change,
And call it reformation — marry will I !

'Tis Even that we're at Odds.

THE festal day approached, and still no invitation arrived for that guest without whom, but a little space since, no feast could have been held in the island ; while, on the other hand, such reports as reached them on every side spoke highly of the favour which Captain Cleveland enjoyed in the family of the old Udaller of Burgh-Westra. Swertha and the old Ranzelman shook their heads at these mutations, and reminded Mordaunt, by many a half-hint and innuendo, that he had incurred this eclipse by being so imprudently active to secure the safety of the stranger, when he lay at the mercy of the next wave beneath the cliffs of Sumburgh Head. 'It is best to let saut water take its gate,' said Swertha : 'luck never came of crossing it.'

'In troth,' said the Ranzelman, 'they are wise folks that let wave and withy haud their ain : luck never came of a half-drowned man, or a half-hanged ane either. Who was't shot Will Paterson off the Noss ?'¹ The Dutchman that he saved from sinking, I trow. To fling a drowning man a plank or a tow may be the part of a Christian ; but I say, keep hands aff him, if ye wad live and thrive free frae his danger.'

'Ye are a wise man, Ranzelman, and a worthy,' echoed Swertha, with a groan, 'and ken how and whan to help a neighbour as weel as ony man that ever drew a net.'

'In troth, I have seen length of days,' answered the Ranzelman, 'and I have heard what the auld folk said to each other

¹ [See Lockhart's *Life of Scott*, vol. iv. p. 202.]

anent sic matters ; and nae man in Zetland shall go farther than I will in any Christian service to a man on firm land ; but if he cry " Help ! " out of the saut waves, that's another story.'

'And yet, to think of this lad Cleveland standing in our Maister Mordaunt's light,' said Swertha, 'and with Magnus Troil, that thought him the flower of the island but on Whitsunday last ; and Magnus, too, that's both held — when he's fresh, honest man ! — the wisest and wealthiest of Zetland !'

'He canna win by it,' said the Ranzelman, with a look of the deepest sagacity. 'There's whiles, Swertha, that the wisest of us, as I am sure I humbly confess mysell not to be, may be little better than gulls, and can no more win by doing deeds of folly than I can step over Sumburgh Head. It has been my own case once or twice in my life. But we shall see soon what ill is to come of all this, for good there cannot come.'

And Swertha answered, with the same tone of prophetic wisdom, 'Na — na, gude can never come on it, and that is ower truly said.'

These doleful predictions, repeated from time to time, had some effect upon Mordaunt. He did not indeed suppose that the charitable action of relieving a drowning man had subjected him, as a necessary and fatal consequence, to the unpleasant circumstances in which he was placed ; yet he felt as if a sort of spell were drawn around him, of which he neither understood the nature nor the extent ; that some power, in short, beyond his own control was acting upon his destiny, and, as it seemed, with no friendly influence. His curiosity, as well as his anxiety, was highly excited, and he continued determined, at all events, to make his appearance at the approaching festival, when he was impressed with the belief that something uncommon was necessarily to take place, which should determine his future views and prospects in life.

As the elder Mertoun was at this time in his ordinary state of health, it became necessary that his son should intimate to him his intended visit to Burgh-Westra. He did so ; and his father desired to know the especial reason of his going thither at this particular time.

'It is a time of merry-making,' replied the youth, 'and all the country are assembled.'

'And you are doubtless impatient to add another fool to the number. Go ; but beware how you walk in the path which you are about to tread : a fall from the cliffs of Foulah were not more fatal.'

'May I ask the reason of your caution, sir?' replied Mordaunt, breaking through the reserve which ordinarily subsisted betwixt him and his singular parent.

'Magnus Troil,' said the elder Mertoun, 'has two daughters; you are of the age when men look upon such gauds with eyes of affection, that they may afterwards learn to curse the day that first opened their eyes upon heaven! I bid you beware of them; for, as sure as that death and sin came into the world by woman, so sure are their soft words and softer looks the utter destruction and ruin of all who put faith in them.'

Mordaunt had sometimes observed his father's marked dislike to the female sex, but had never before heard him give vent to it in terms so determined and precise. He replied, that the daughters of Magnus Troil were no more to him than any other females in the islands. 'They were even of less importance,' he said, 'for they had broken off their friendship with him, without assigning any cause.'

'And you go to seek the renewal of it?' answered his father. 'Silly moth, that has once escaped the taper without singeing thy wings, are you not contented with the safe obscurity of these wilds, but must hasten back to the flame, which is sure at length to consume thee? But why should I waste arguments in deterring thee from thy inevitable fate? Go where thy destiny calls thee.'

On the succeeding day, which was the eve of the great festival, Mordaunt set forth on his road to Burgh-Westra, pondering alternately on the injunctions of Norna, on the ominous words of his father, on the inauspicious auguries of Swertha and the Ranzelman of Jarlshof; and not without experiencing that gloom with which so many concurring circumstances of ill omen combined to oppress his mind.

'It bodes me but a cold reception at Burgh-Westra,' said he; 'but my stay shall be the shorter. I will but find out whether they have been deceived by this seafaring stranger, or whether they have acted out of pure caprice of temper and love of change of company. If the first be the case, I will vindicate my character, and let Captain Cleveland look to himself; if the latter, why, then, good-night to Burgh-Westra and all its inmates.'

As he mentally meditated this last alternative, hurt pride, and a return of fondness for those to whom he supposed he was bidding farewell for ever, brought a tear into his eye,

which he dashed off hastily and indignantly, as, mending his pace, he continued on his journey.

The weather being now serene and undisturbed, Mordaunt made his way with an ease that formed a striking contrast to the difficulties which he had encountered when he last travelled the same route; yet there was a less pleasing subject for comparison within his own mind.

'My breast,' he said to himself, 'was then against the wind, but my heart within was serene and happy. I would I had now the same careless feelings, were they to be bought by battling with the severest storm that ever blew across these lonely hills!'

With such thoughts, he arrived about noon at Harfra, the habitation, as the reader may remember, of the ingenious Mr. Yellowley. Our traveller had, upon the present occasion, taken care to be quite independent of the niggardly hospitality of this mansion, which was now become infamous on that account through the whole island, by bringing with him, in his small knapsack, such provisions as might have sufficed for a longer journey. In courtesy, however, or rather, perhaps, to get rid of his own disquieting thoughts, Mordaunt did not fail to call at the mansion, which he found in singular commotion. Trip-tolemus himself, invested with a pair of large jack-boots, went clattering up and down stairs, screaming out questions to his sister and his serving-woman Tronda, who replied with shriller and more complicated screeches. At length, Mrs. Baby herself made her appearance, her venerable person endued with what was then called a joseph — an ample garment, which had once been green, but now, betwixt stains and patches, had become, like the vesture of the patriarch whose name it bore, a garment of divers colours. A steeple-crowned hat, the purchase of some long-past moment, in which vanity had got the better of avarice, with a feather which had stood as much wind and rain as if it had been part of a seamew's wing, made up her equipment, save that in her hand she held a silver-mounted whip of antique fashion. This attire, as well as an air of determined bustle in the gait and appearance of Mrs. Barbara Yellowley, seemed to bespeak that she was prepared to take a journey, and cared not, as the saying goes, who knew that such was her determination.

She was the first that observed Mordaunt on his arrival, and she greeted him with a degree of mingled emotion. 'Be good to us!' she exclaimed, 'if there is not the canty callant

that wears you thing about his neck, and that snapped up our goose as light as if it had been a sandie-lavrock !' The admiration of the gold chain, which had formerly made so deep an impression on her mind, was marked in the first part of her speech, the recollection of the untimely fate of the smoked goose was commemorated in the second clause. 'I will lay the burden of my life,' she instantly added, 'that he is gauging our gate.

'I am bound for Burgh-Westra, Mrs. Yellowley,' said Mordaunt.

'And blithe will we be of your company,' she added. 'It's early day to eat, but if you liked a barley scone and a drink of bland — nathelless, it is ill travelling on a full stomach, besides quelling your appetite for the feast that is biding you this day ; for all sort of prodigality there will doubtless be.'

Mordaunt produced his own stores, and, explaining that he did not love to be burdensome to them on this second occasion, invited them to partake of the provisions he had to offer. Poor Triptolemus, who seldom saw half so good a dinner as his guest's luncheon, threw himself upon the good cheer, like Sancho on the scum of Camacho's kettle, and even the lady herself could not resist the temptation, though she gave way to it with more moderation, and with something like a sense of shame. 'She had let the fire out,' she said, 'for it was a pity wasting fuel in so cold a country, and so she had not thought of getting anything ready, as they were to set out so soon ; and so she could not but say that the young gentleman's "nacket" looked very good ; and, besides, she had some curiosity to see whether the folks in that country cured their beef in the same way they did in the north of Scotland' ; under which combined considerations, Dame Baby made a hearty experiment on the refreshments which thus unexpectedly presented themselves.

When their extemporary repast was finished, the factor became solicitous to take the road ; and now Mordaunt discovered that the alacrity with which he had been received by Mistress Baby was not altogether disinterested. Neither she nor the learned Triptolemus felt much disposed to commit themselves to the wilds of Zetland without the assistance of a guide ; and although they could have commanded the aid of one of their own labouring folks, yet the cautious agriculturist observed, that it would be losing at least one day's work ; and his sister multiplied his apprehensions by echoing back, 'One day's work ! ye may weel say twenty ; for, set ane of their

coos within the smell of a kail-pot, and their lugs within the sound of a fiddle, and whistle them back if ye can !'

Now the fortunate arrival of Mordaunt, in the very nick of time, not to mention the good cheer which he brought with him, made him as welcome as any one could possibly be to a threshold which, on all ordinary occasions, abhorred the passage of a guest ; nor was Mr. Yellowley altogether insensible of the pleasure he promised himself in detailing his plans of improvement to his young companion, and enjoying what his fate seldom assigned him -- the company of a patient and admiring listener.

As the factor and his sister were to prosecute their journey on horseback, it only remained to mount their guide and companion -- a thing easily accomplished where there are such numbers of shaggy, long-backed, short legged ponies running wild upon the extensive moors, which are the common pasturage for the cattle of every township, where shelties, geese, swine, goats, sheep, and little Zetland cows are turned out promiscuously, and often in numbers which can obtain but precarious subsistence from the niggard vegetation. There is, indeed, a right of individual property in all these animals, which are branded or tattooed by each owner with his own peculiar mark ; but when any passenger has occasional use for a pony, he never scruples to lay hold of the first which he can catch, puts on a halter, and, having rode him as far as he finds convenient, turns the animal loose to find his way back again as he best can -- a matter in which the ponies are sufficiently sagacious.

Although this general exercise of property was one of the enormities which in due time the factor intended to abolish, yet, like a wise man, he scrupled not, in the meantime, to avail himself of so general a practice, which, he condescended to allow, was particularly convenient for those who, as chanced to be his own present case, had no ponies of their own on which their neighbours could retaliate. Three shelties, therefore, were procured from the hill -- little shagged animals, more resembling wild bears than anything of the horse tribe, yet possessed of no small degree of strength and spirit, and able to endure as much fatigue and indifferent usage as any creatures in the world.

Two of these horses were already provided and fully accoutred for the journey. One of them, destined to bear the fair person of Mistress Baby, was decorated with a huge side-saddle of venerable antiquity -- a mass, as it were, of cushion

and padding, from which depended, on all sides, a housing of ancient tapestry, which, having been originally intended for a horse of ordinary size, covered up the diminutive palfrey over which it was spread, from the ears to the tail, and from the shoulder to the fetlock, leaving nothing visible but its head, which looked fiercely out from these enfoldments, like the heraldic representation of a lion looking out of a bush. Mordaunt gallantly lifted up the fair Mistress Yellowley, and at the expense of very slight exertion placed her upon the summit of her mountainous saddle. It is probable that, on feeling herself thus squired and attended upon, and experiencing the long unwonted consciousness that she was attired in her best array, some thoughts dawned upon Mistress Baby's mind which checkered for an instant those habitual ideas about thrift that formed the daily and all-engrossing occupation of her soul. She glanced her eye upon her faded Joseph, and on the long housings of her saddle, as she observed, with a smile, to Mordaunt, that 'Travelling was a pleasant thing in fine weather and agreeable company, if,' she added, glancing a look at a place where the embroidery was somewhat frayed and tattered, 'it was not so wasteful to one's horse-furniture.'

Meanwhile, her brother stepped stoutly to his steed; and as he chose, notwithstanding the serenity of the weather, to throw a long red cloak over his other garments, his pony was even more completely enveloped in drapery than that of his sister. It happened, moreover, to be an animal of a high and contumacious spirit, bouncing and curvetting occasionally under the weight of Triptolemus, with a vivacity which, notwithstanding his Yorkshire descent, rather deranged him in the saddle; gambols which, as the palfrey itself was not visible, except upon the strictest inspection, had, at a little distance, an effect as if they were the voluntary movements of the cloaked cavalier, without the assistance of any other legs than those with which nature had provided him; and, to any who had viewed Triptolemus under such a persuasion, the gravity, and even distress, announced in his countenance must have made a ridiculous contrast to the vivacious caprioles with which he piaffed along the moor.

Mordaunt kept up with this worthy couple, mounted, according to the simplicity of the time and country, on the first and readiest pony which they had been able to press into the service, with no other accoutrement of any kind than the halter which served to guide him; while Mr. Yellowley, seeing with

pleasure his guide thus readily provided with a steed, privately resolved that this rude custom of helping travellers to horses, without leave of the proprietor, should not be abated in Zetland until he came to possess a herd of ponies belonging in property to himself, and exposed to suffer in the way of retaliation.

But to other uses or abuses of the country Triptolemus Yellowley showed himself less tolerant. Long and wearisome were the discourses he held with Mordaunt, or (to speak much more correctly) the harangues which he inflicted upon him, concerning the changes which his own advent in these isles was about to occasion. Unskilled as he was in the modern arts by which an estate may be improved to such a high degree that it shall altogether slip through the proprietor's fingers, Triptolemus had at least the zeal, if not the knowledge, of a whole agricultural society in his own person; nor was he surpassed by any one who has followed him in that noble spirit which scorns to balance profit against outlay, but holds the glory of effecting a great change on the face of the land to be, like virtue, in a great degree its own reward.

No part of the wild and mountainous region over which Mordaunt guided him but what suggested to his active imagination some scheme of improvement and alteration. He would make a road through yon scarce passable glen, where at present nothing but the sure-footed creatures on which they were mounted could tread with any safety. He would substitute better houses for the skeos, or sheds built of dry stones, in which the inhabitants cured or manufactured their fish; they should brew good ale instead of bland; they should plant forests where tree never grew; and find mines of treasure where a Danish skilling was accounted a coin of a most respectable denomination. All these mutations, with many others, did the worthy factor resolve upon, speaking at the same time with the utmost confidence of the countenance and assistance which he was to receive from the higher classes, and especially from Magnus Troil.

'I will impart some of my ideas to the poor man,' he said, 'before we are both many hours older; and you will mark how grateful he will be to the instructor who brings him knowledge, which is better than wealth.'

'I would not have you build too strongly on that,' said Mordaunt, by way of caution. 'Magnus Troil's boat is kittle to trim; he likes his own ways, and his country ways, and you

will as soon teach your sheltie to dive like a sealgh as bring Magnus to take a Scottish fashion in the place of a Norse one; and yet, if he is steady to his old customs, he may perhaps be as changeable as another in his old friendships.'

'*Heus, tu inepte!*' said the scholar of St. Andrews, 'steady or unsteady, what can it matter? Ain not I here in point of trust and in point of power? and shall a fowd, by which barbarous appellative this Magnus Troil still calls himself, presume to measure judgment and weigh reasons with me, who represent the full dignity of the chamberlain of the islands of Orkney and Zetland?'

'Still,' said Mordaunt, 'I would advise you not to advance too rashly upon his prejudices. Magnus Troil, from the hour of his birth to this day, never saw a greater man than himself, and it is difficult to bridle an old horse for the first time. Besides, he has at no time in his life been a patient listener to long explanations, so it is possible that he may quarrel with your proposed reformation before you can convince him of its advantages.'

'How mean you, young man?' said the factor. 'Is there one who dwells in these islands who is so wretchedly blind as not to be sensible of their deplorable defects? Can a man,' he added, rising into enthusiasm as he spoke, 'or even a beast, look at that thing there, which they have the impudence to call a corn-mill,¹ without trembling to think that corn should be entrusted to such a miserable molendinary? The wretches are obliged to have at least fifty in each parish, each trundling away upon its paltry millstone, under the thatch of a roof no bigger than a bee-skep, instead of a noble and seemly baron's mill, of which you would hear the clack through the hail country, and that casts the meal through the mill-eye by forpits at a time!'

'Ay — ay, brother,' said his sister, 'that's spoken like your wise sell. The mair cost the mair honour — that's your word ever mair. Can it no creep into your wise head, man, that ilka body grinds their ain nievefu' of meal in this country, without plaguing themsells about barons' mills, and thirls, and sucken, and the like trade? How mony a time have I heard you bell-the-cat with auld Edie Netherstane, the miller at Grindieburn, and wi' his very knave too, about in-town and out-town multures, lock, gowpen, and knaveship,² and a' the lave o't; and now naething less will serve you than to bring

¹ See Note 18.

² [See *Monastery*, Notes 8 and 9, p. 377.]

in the very same fashery on a wheen pair bodies, that big ilk ane a mill for themselves, sic as it is ?'

'Dinna tell me of gowpen and knaveship !' exclaimed the indignant agriculturist ; 'better pay the half of the grist to the miller, to have the rest grund in a Christian manner, than put good grain into a bairn's whirligig. Look at it for a moment, Baby. Bide still, ye cursed imp !' This interjection was applied to his pony, which began to be extremely impatient, while its rider interrupted his journey to point out all the weak points of the Zetland mill. 'Look at it, I say — it's just one degree better than a hand-quern : it has neither wheel nor trindle, neither cog nor happer. Bide still, there's a canny beast. It canna grind a bickerfu' of meal in a quarter of an hour, and that will be mair like a mash for horse than a meltith for man's use. Wherefore — Bide still, I say ! — wherefore — wherefore — The deil's in the beast, and nae good, I think !'

As he uttered the last words, the shelty, which had pranced and curvetted for some time with much impatience, at length got its head betwixt its legs, and at once canted its rider into the little rivulet which served to drive the depreciated engine he was surveying ; then emancipating itself from the folds of the cloak, fled back towards its own wilderness, neighing in scorn, and flinging out its heels at every five yards.

Laughing heartily at his disaster, Mordaunt helped the old man to arise ; while his sister sarcastically congratulated him on having fallen rather into the shallows of a Zetland rivulet than the depths of a Scottish mill-pond. Disdaining to reply to this sarcasm, Triptolemus, so soon as he had recovered his legs, shaken his ears, and found that the folds of his cloak had saved him from being much wet in the scanty streamlet, exclaimed aloud, 'I will have cussers from Lanarkshire, brood mares from Ayrshire : I will not have one of these cursed abortions left on the islands, to break honest folks' necks. I say, Baby, I will rid the land of them.'

'Ye had better wring your ain cloak, Triptolemus,' answered Baby.

Mordaunt meanwhile was employed in catching another pony from a herd which strayed at some distance ; and, having made a halter out of twisted rushes, he seated the dismayed agriculturist in safety upon a more quiet, though less active, steed than that which he had at first bestrode.

But Mr. Yellowley's fall had operated as a considerable relative upon his spirits, and, for the full space of five miles'

travel, he said scarce a word, leaving full course to the melancholy aspirations and lamentations which his sister Baby bestowed on the old bridle, which the pony had carried off in its flight, and which, she observed, after having lasted for eighteen years come Martinmas, might now be considered as a castaway thing. Finding she had thus the field to herself, the old lady launched forth into a lecture upon economy, according to her own idea of that virtue, which seemed to include a system of privations which, though observed with the sole purpose of saving money, might, if undertaken upon other principles, have ranked high in the history of a religious ascetic.

She was but little interrupted by Mordaunt, who, conscious he was now on the eve of approaching Burgh-Westra, employed himself rather in the task of anticipating the nature of the reception he was about to meet with there from two beautiful young women than with the prosing of an old one, however wisely she might prove that small-beer was more wholesome than strong ale, and that, if her brother had bruised his ankle-bone in his tumble, cumfrey and butter was better to bring him round again than all the doctors' drugs in the world.

But now the dreary moorlands, over which their path had hitherto lain, were exchanged for a more pleasant prospect, opening on a salt-water lake, or arm of the sea, which ran up far inland, and was surrounded by flat and fertile ground, producing crops better than the experienced eye of Triptolemus Yellowley had as yet witnessed in Zetland. In the midst of this Goshen stood the mansion of Burgh-Westra, screened from the north and east by a ridge of heathy hills which lay behind it, and commanding an interesting prospect of the lake and its parent ocean, as well as the islands and more distant mountains. From the mansion itself, as well as from almost every cottage in the adjacent hamlet, arose such a rich cloud of vapoury smoke as showed that the preparations for the festival were not confined to the principal residence of Magnus himself, but extended through the whole vicinage.

'My certie,' said Mrs. Baby Yellowley, 'ane wad think the haill town was on fire! The very hillside smells of their wastefulness, and a hungry heart wad scarce seek better kitchen¹ to a barley scone than just to waft it in the reek that's rising out of yon lums.'

¹ What is eat by way of relish to dry bread is called *kitchen* in Scotland, as cheese, dried fish, or the like relishing morsels.

CHAPTER XII

Thou hast described
A hot friend cooling. Ever note, Lucilius,
When love begins to sicken and decay,
It useth an enforced ceremony.
There are no tricks in plain and simple faith.

Julius Caesar.

IF the smell which was wafted from the chimneys of Burgh-
Westra up to the barren hills by which the mansion was
surrounded could, as Mistress Barbara opined, have re-
freshed the hungry, the noise which proceeded from thence might
have given hearing to the deaf. It was a medley of all sounds,
and all connected with jollity and kind welcome. Nor were the
sights associated with them less animating.

Troops of friends were seen in the act of arriving — their dis-
persed ponies flying to the moors in every direction, to recover
their own pastures in the best way they could; such, as we
have already said, being the usual mode of discharging the
cavalry which had been levied for a day's service. At a small
but commodious harbour, connected with the house and hamlet,
those visitors were landing from their boats who, living in
distant islands and along the coast, had preferred making their
journey by sea. Mordaunt and his companions might see each
party pausing frequently to greet each other, and strolling on
successively to the house, whose ever open gate received them
alternately in such numbers that it seemed the extent of the
mansion, though suited to the opulence and hospitality of the
owner, was scarce, on this occasion, sufficient for the guests.

Among the confused sounds of mirth and welcome which
arose at the entrance of each new company, Mordaunt thought
he could distinguish the loud laugh and hearty salutation of
the sire of the mansion, and began to feel more deeply than
before the anxious doubt whether that cordial reception, which
was distributed so freely to all others, would be on this occasion

extended to him. As they came on, they heard the voluntary scrapings and bravura effusions of the gallant fiddlers, who impatiently flung already from their bows those sounds with which they were to animate the evening. The clamour of the cook's assistants, and the loud scolding tones of the cook himself, were also to be heard — sounds of dissonance at any other time, but which, subdued with others, and by certain happy associations, form no disagreeable part of the full chorus which always precedes a rural feast.

Meanwhile, the guests advanced, each full of their own thoughts. Mordaunt's we have already noticed. Baby was wrapt up in the melancholy grief and surprise excited by the positive conviction that so much victuals had been cooked at once as were necessary to feed all the mouths which were clamouring around her — an enormity of expense which, though she was no way concerned in bearing it, affected her nerves, as the beholding a massacre would touch those of the most indifferent spectator, however well assured of his own personal safety. She sickened, in short, at the sight of so much extravagance, like Abyssinian Bruce, when he saw the luckless minstrels of Gondar hacked to pieces by the order of Ras Michael. As for her brother, they being now arrived where the rude and antique instruments of Zetland agriculture lay scattered in the usual confusion of a Scottish barn-yard, his thoughts were at once engrossed in the deficiencies of the one-stilted plough; of the 'twiscar,' with which they dig peats; of the sledges, on which they transport commodities; of all and everything, in short, in which the usages of the islands differed from those of the mainland of Scotland. The sight of these imperfect instruments stirred the blood of Triptolemus Yellowley, as that of the bold warrior rises at seeing the arms and insignia of the enemy he is about to combat; and, faithful to his high emprise, he thought less of the hunger which his journey had occasioned, although about to be satisfied by such a dinner as rarely fell to his lot, than upon the task which he had undertaken of civilising the manners, and improving the cultivation, of Zetland.

'*Jacta est alea*,' he muttered to himself; 'this very day shall prove whether the Zetlanders are worthy of our labours, or whether their minds are as incapable of cultivation as their peat-mosses. Yet, let us be cautious, and watch the soft time of speech. I feel, by my own experience, that it were best to let the body, in its present state, take the place of the mind.

A mouthful of that same roast-beef, which smells so delicately, will form an apt introduction to my grand plan for improving the breed of stock.'

By this time the visitors had reached the low but ample front of Magnus Troil's residence, which seemed of various dates, with large and ill-imagined additions, hastily adapted to the original building, as the increasing estate, or enlarged family, of successive proprietors appeared to each to demand. Beneath a low, broad, and large porch, supported by two huge carved posts, once the head-ornaments of vessels which had found shipwreck upon the coast, stood Magnus himself, intent on the hospitable toil of receiving and welcoming the numerous guests who successively approached. His strong, portly figure was well adapted to the dress which he wore — a blue coat of an antique cut, lined with scarlet, and laced and looped with gold down the seams and button-holes, and along the ample cuffs. Strong and masculine features, rendered ruddy and brown by frequent exposure to severe weather; a quantity of most venerable silver hair, which fell in unshorn profusion from under his gold-laced hat, and was carelessly tied with a ribbon behind, expressed at once his advanced age, his hasty, yet well-conditioned temper, and his robust constitution. As our travellers approached him, a shade of displeasure seemed to cross his brow and to interrupt for an instant the honest and hearty burst of hilarity with which he had been in the act of greeting all prior arrivals. When he approached Triptolemus Yellowley, he drew himself up, so as to mix, as it were, some share of the stately importance of the opulent Udaller with the welcome afforded by the frank and hospitable landlord.

'You are welcome, Mr. Yellowley,' was his address to the factor — 'you are welcome to Westra; the wind has blown you on a rough coast, and we that are the natives must be kind to you as we can. This, I believe, is your sister. Mrs. Barbara Yellowley, permit me the honour of a neighbourly salute.' And so saying, with a daring and self-devoted courtesy which would find no equal in our degenerate days, he actually ventured to salute the withered cheek of the spinstress, who relaxed so much of her usual peevishness of expression as to receive the courtesy with something which approached to a smile. He then looked full at Mordaunt Mertoun, and, without offering his hand, said, in a tone somewhat broken by suppressed agitation, 'You, too, are welcome, Master Mordaunt.'

'Did I not think so,' said Mordaunt, naturally offended by

the coldness of his host's manner, 'I had not been here; and it is not yet too late to turn back.'

'Young man,' replied Magnus, 'you know better than most that from these doors no man can turn without an offence to their owner. I pray you, disturb not my guests by your ill-timed scruples. When Magnus Troil says welcome, all are welcome who are within hearing of his voice, and it is an indifferent loud one. Walk on, my worthy guests, and let us see what cheer my lasses can make you within doors.'

So saying, and taking care to make his manner so general to the whole party that Mordaunt should not be able to appropriate any particular portion of the welcome to himself, nor yet to complain of being excluded from all share in it, the Udaller ushered the guests into his house, where two large outer rooms, which, on the present occasion, served the purpose of a modern saloon, were already crowded with guests of every description.

The furniture was sufficiently simple, and had a character peculiar to the situation of these stormy islands. Magnus Troil was, indeed, like most of the higher class of Zetland proprietors, a friend to the distressed traveller, whether by sea or land, and had repeatedly exerted his whole authority in protecting the property and persons of shipwrecked mariners; yet so frequent were wrecks upon that tremendous coast, and so many unappropriated articles were constantly flung ashore, that the interior of the house bore sufficient witness to the ravages of the ocean, and to the exercise of those rights which the lawyers term 'flotsome and jetsome.' The chairs, which were arranged around the walls, were such as are used in cabins, and many of them were of foreign construction; the mirrors and cabinets, which were placed against the walls for ornament or convenience, had, it was plain from their form, been constructed for ship-board, and one or two of the latter were of strange and unknown wood. Even the partition which separated the two apartments seemed constructed out of the bulk-head of some large vessel, clumsily adapted to the service which it at present performed by the labour of some native joiner. To a stranger these evident marks and tokens of human misery might, at the first glance, form a contrast with the scene of mirth with which they were now associated; but the association was so familiar to the natives that it did not for a moment interrupt the course of their glee.

To the younger part of these revellers the presence of Mordaunt was like a fresh charm of enjoyment. All came around

him to marvel at his absence, and all, by their repeated inquiries, plainly showed that they conceived it had been entirely voluntary on his side. The youth felt that this general acceptance relieved his anxiety on one painful point. Whatever prejudice the family of Burgh-Westra might have adopted respecting him, it must be of a private nature; and at least he had not the additional pain of finding that he was depreciated in the eyes of society at large; and his vindication, when he found opportunity to make one, would not require to be extended beyond the circle of a single family. This was consoling; though his heart still throbbed with anxiety at the thought of meeting with his estranged but still beloved friends. Laying the excuse of his absence on his father's state of health, he made his way through the various groups of friends and guests, each of whom seemed willing to detain him as long as possible, and having, by presenting them to one or two families of consequence, got rid of his travelling-companions, who at first stuck fast as burs, he reached at length the door of a small apartment, which, opening from one of the large exterior rooms we have mentioned, Minna and Brenda had been permitted to fit up after their own taste, and to call their peculiar property.

Mordaunt had contributed no small share of the invention and mechanical execution employed in fitting up this favourite apartment, and in disposing its ornaments. It was, indeed, during his last residence at Burgh-Westra, as free to his entrance and occupation as to its proper mistresses. But now, so much were times altered that he remained with his finger on the latch, uncertain whether he should take the freedom to draw it, until Brenda's voice pronounced the words, 'Come in, then,' in the tone of one who is interrupted by an unwelcome disturber, who is to be heard and despatched with all the speed possible.

At this signal, Mertoun entered the fanciful cabinet of the sisters, which, by the addition of many ornaments, including some articles of considerable value, had been fitted up for the approaching festival. The daughters of Magnus, at the moment of Mordaunt's entrance, were seated in deep consultation with the stranger Cleveland and with a little, slight-made old man, whose eye retained all the vivacity of spirit which had supported him under the thousand vicissitudes of a changeful and precarious life, and which, accompanying him in his old age, rendered his grey hairs less awfully reverend perhaps, but not less beloved, than would a more grave and less imaginative expression of countenance and character. There was even a penetrat-

ing shrewdness mingled in the look of curiosity with which, as he stepped for an instant aside, he seemed to watch the meeting of Mordaunt with the two lovely sisters.

The reception the youth met with resembled, in general character, that which he had experienced from Magnus himself; but the maidens could not so well cover their sense of the change of circumstances under which they met. Both blushed, as, rising, and without extending the hand, far less offering the cheek, as the fashion of the times permitted, and almost exacted, they paid to Mordaunt the salutation due to an ordinary acquaintance. But the blush of the older was one of those transient evidences of flitting emotion that vanish as fast as the passing thought which excites them. In an instant she stood before the youth calm and cold, returning, with guarded and cautious courtesy, the usual civilities, which, with a faltering voice, Mordaunt endeavoured to present to her. The emotion of Brenda bore, externally at least, a deeper and more agitating character. Her blush extended over every part of her beautiful skin which her dress permitted to be visible, including her slender neck and the upper region of a finely-formed bosom. Neither did she even attempt to reply to what share of his confused compliment Mordaunt addressed to her in particular, but regarded him with eyes in which displeasure was evidently mingled with feelings of regret and recollections of former times. Mordaunt felt, as it were, assured upon the instant that the regard of Minna was extinguished, but that it might be yet possible to recover that of the milder Brenda; and such is the waywardness of human fancy, that, though he had never hitherto made any distinct difference betwixt these two beautiful and interesting girls, the favour of her which seemed most absolutely withdrawn became at the moment the most interesting in his eyes.

He was disturbed in these hasty reflections by Cleveland, who advanced, with military frankness, to pay his compliments to his preserver, having only delayed long enough to permit the exchange of the ordinary salutation betwixt the visitor and the ladies of the family. He made his approach with so good a grace, that it was impossible for Mordaunt, although he dated his loss of favour at Burgh-Westra from the stranger's appearance on the coast and domestication in the family, to do less than return his advances as courtesy demanded, accept his thanks with an appearance of satisfaction, and hope that his time had passed pleasantly since their last meeting.

Cleveland was about to answer, but he was anticipated by the little old man, formerly noticed, who, now thrusting himself forward and seizing Mordaunt's hand, kissed him on the forehead; and then at the same time echoed and answered his question. 'How passes time at Burgh-Westra? Was it you that asked it, my prince of the cliff and of the scaur? How should it pass, but with all the wings that beauty and joy can add to help its flight!'

'And wit and song, too, my good old friend,' said Mordaunt, half-serious, half-jesting, as he shook the old man cordially by the hand. 'These cannot be wanting where Claud Halero comes!'

'Jeer me not, Mordaunt, my good lad,' replied the old man. 'When your foot is as slow as mine, your wit frozen, and your song out of tune ——'

'How can you belie yourself, my good master?' answered Mordaunt, who was not unwilling to avail himself of his old friend's peculiarities to introduce something like conversation, break the awkwardness of this singular meeting, and gain time for observation, ere requiring an explanation of the change of conduct which the family seemed to have adopted towards him. 'Say not so,' he continued. 'Time, my old friend, lays his hand lightly on the bard. Have I not heard you say, the poet partakes the immortality of his song? and surely the great English poet you used to tell us of was elder than yourself when he pulled the bow-oar among all the wits of London.'

This alluded to a story which was, as the French term it, Halero's *cheval de bataille*, and any allusion to which was certain at once to place him in the saddle and to push his hobby-horse into full career.

His laughing eye kindled with a sort of enthusiasm, which the ordinary folk of this world might have called crazed, while he dashed into the subject which he best loved to talk upon. 'Alas, alas, my dear Mordaunt Mertoun, silver is silver, and waxes not dim by use; and pewter is pewter, and grows the longer the duller. It is not for poor Claud Halero to name himself in the same twelvemonth with the immortal John Dryden. True it is, as I may have told you before, that I have seen that great man, nay, I have been in the Wits' Coffee-house, as it was then called, and had once a pinch out of his own very snuff-box. I must have told you all how it happened, but here is Captain Cleveland who never heard it. I lodged, you must know, in Russel Street — I question not but you know Russel Street, Covent Garden, Captain Cleveland?'

'I should know its latitude pretty well, Mr. Halero,' said the captain, smiling; 'but I believe you mentioned the circumstance yesterday, and, besides, we have the day's duty in hand: you must play us this song which we are to study.'

'It will not serve the turn now,' said Halero: 'we must think of something that will take in our dear Mordaunt, the first voice in the island, whether for a part or solo. I will never be he will touch a string to you unless Mordaunt Mertoun is to help us out. What say you, my fairest Night? What think you, my sweet Dawn of Day?' he added, addressing the young women, to whom, as we have said elsewhere, he had long before bestowed these allegorical names.

'No Mordaunt Mertoun,' said Minna, 'has come too late to be of our band on this occasion: it is our misfortune, but it cannot be helped.'

'How can it?' said Halero, hastily — 'too late — and you have passed together all your lives? Take my word, my bonny lasses, that old tunes are sweetest, and old friends surest. Mr. Cleveland has a fine bass, that must be allowed; but I would have you trust for the first effect to one of the twenty fine airs you can sing where Mordaunt's tenor joins so well with your own witchery. Here is my lovely Day approves the change in her heart.'

'You were never in your life more mistaken, father Halero,' said Brenda, her cheeks again reddening, more with displeasure, it seemed, than with shame.

'Nay, but how is this?' said the old man, pausing and looking at them alternately. 'What have we got here? A cloudy night and a red morning? That betokens rough weather. What means all this, young women? — where lies the offence? In me, I fear; for the blame is always laid upon the oldest when young folks like you go by the ears.'

'The blame is not with you, father Halero,' said Minna, rising and taking her sister by the arm, 'if indeed there be blame anywhere.'

'I should fear then, Minna,' said Mordaunt, endeavouring to soften his tone into one of indifferent pleasantry, 'that the new-comer has brought the offence along with him.'

'When no offence is taken,' replied Minna, with her usual gravity, 'it matters not by whom such may have been offered.'

'Is it possible, Minna!' exclaimed Mordaunt, 'and is it you who speak thus to me! And you too, Brenda, can you too

judge so harshly of me, yet without permitting me one moment of honest and frank explanation !'

'Those who should know best,' answered Brenda, in a low but decisive tone of voice, 'have told us their pleasure, and it must be done. Sister, I think we have staid too long here, and shall be wanted elsewhere. Mr. Mertoun will excuse us on so busy a day.'

The sisters linked their arms together. Halero in vain endeavoured to stop them, making, at the same time, a theatrical gesture, and exclaiming —

'Now, Day and Night, but this is wondrous strange !'

Then turned to Mordaunt Mertoun, and added, 'The girls are possessed with the spirit of mutability, showing, as our master Spenser well saith, that

Among all living creatures, more or lesse,
Change still doth reign, and keep the greater sway.

Captain Cleveland,' he continued, 'know you anything that has happened to put these two juvenile Graces out of tune ?'

'He will lose his reckoning,' answered Cleveland, 'that spends time in inquiring why the wind shifts a point or why a woman changes her mind. Were I Mr. Mordaunt, I would not ask the proud wenches another question on such a subject.'

'It is a friendly advice, Captain Cleveland,' replied Mordaunt, 'and I will not hold it the less so that it has been given unasked. Allow me to inquire if you are yourself as indifferent to the opinion of your female friends as it seems you would have me to be ?'

'Who, I ?' said the captain, with an air of frank indifference, 'I never thought twice upon such a subject. I never saw a woman worth thinking twice about after the manner of a peak on shore it is another thing, and I will laugh, sing, dance, and make love, if they like it, with twenty girls, were they but half so pretty as those who have left us, and make them heartily welcome to change their course in the sound of a boatswain's whistle. It will be odds but I wear as fast as they can.'

A patient is seldom pleased with that sort of consolation which is founded on holding tight the malady of which he complains ; and Mordaunt felt disposed to be offended with Captain Cleveland both for taking notice of his embarrassment and intruding upon him his own opinion ; and he replied,

therefore, somewhat sharply, 'That Captain Cleveland's sentiments were only suited to such as had the art to become universal favourites wherever chance happened to throw them, and who could not lose in one place more than their merit was sure to gain for them in another.'

This was spoken ironically; but there was, to confess the truth, a superior knowledge of the world, and a consciousness of external merit at least, about the man which rendered his interference doubly disagreeable. As Sir Lucius O'Trigger says, there was an air of success about Captain Cleveland which was mighty provoking. Young, handsome, and well assured, his air of nautical bluntness sat naturally and easily upon him, and was perhaps particularly well fitted to the simple manners of the remote country in which he found himself; and where, even in the best families, a greater degree of refinement might have rendered his conversation rather less acceptable. He was contented, in the present instance, to smile good-humouredly at the obvious discontent of Mordaunt Mertoun, and replied, 'You are angry with me, my good friend, but you cannot make me angry with you. The fair hands of all the pretty women I ever saw in my life would never have fished me up out of the Roost of Sumburgh. So, pray, do not quarrel with me; for here is Mr. Halero witness that I have struck both jack and topsail, and should you fire a broadside into me, cannot return a single shot.'

'Ay — ay,' said Halero, 'you must be friends with Captain Cleveland, Mordaunt. Never quarrel with your friend because a woman is whimsical. Why, man, if they kept one humour, how the devil could we make so many songs on them as we do?' Even old Dryden himself, glorious old John, could have said little about a girl that was always of one mind: as well write verses upon a mill-pond. It is your tides and your roosts, and your currents and eddies, that come and go, and ebb and flow — by Heaven! I run into rhyme when I so much as think upon them — that smile one day, rage the next, flatter and devour, delight and ruin us, and so forth — it is these that give the real soul of poetry. Did you never hear my "Adieu to the Lass of Northmaven"? That was poor Bet Stimbister, whom I call Mary for the sound's sake, as I call myself Hacon, after my great ancestor Hacon Goldemund, or Haco with the Golden Mouth, who came to the island with Harold Harfager, and was his chief Scald? Well, but where was I? Oh ay; poor Bet Stimbister, she — and partly some debt — was the cause of my

leaving the isles of Hialtland — better so called than Shetland, or Zetland even — and taking to the broad world. I have had a tramp of it since that time. I have battled my way through the world, captain, as a man of mold may, that has a light head, a light purse, and a heart as light as them both; fought my way, and paid my way, that is, either with money or wit; have seen kings changed and deposed as you would turn a tenant out of a scat-hold; knew all the wits of the age, and especially the glorious John Dryden; what man in the islands can say as much, barring lying? I had a pinch out of his own snuff-box; I will tell you how I came by such promotion.

‘But the song, Mr. Halcro,’ said Captain Cleveland.

‘The song!’ answered Halcro, seizing the captain by the button — for he was too much accustomed to have his audience escape from him during recitation, not to put in practice all the usual means of prevention, — ‘the song! Why, I gave a copy of it, with fifteen others, to the immortal John. You shall hear it — you shall hear them all, if you will but stand still a moment; and you too, my dear boy, Mordaunt Mertoun, I have scarce heard a word from your mouth these six months, and now you are running away from me.’ So saying, he secured him with his other hand.

‘Nay, now he has got us both in tow,’ said the seaman, ‘there is nothing for it but hearing him out, though he spins as tough a yarn as ever an old man-of-war’s-man t’sted on the watch at midnight.’

‘Nay, now, be silent — be silent, and let one of us speak at once,’ said the poet, imperatively; while Cleveland and Mordaunt, looking at each other with a ludicrous expression of resignation to their fate, waited in submission for the well-known and inevitable tale. ‘I will tell you all about it,’ continued Halcro. ‘I was knocked about the world like other young fellows, doing this, that, and t’other for a livelihood; for, thank God, I could turn my hand to anything; but loving still the Muses as much as if the ungrateful jades had found me, like so many blockheads, in my own coach and six. However, I held out till my cousin, old Lawrence Linkletter, died, and left me the bit of an island yonder; although, by the way, Cultmalindie was as near to him as I was; but Lawrence loved wit, though he had little of his own. Well, he left me the wee bit island — it is as barren as Parnassus itself. What then? I have a penny to spend, a penny to keep my purse, a penny to give to the poor — ay, and a bed and a bottle for a friend, as

you shall know, boys, if you will go back with me when this merriment is over. But where was I in my story ?

'Near port, I hope,' answered Cleveland ; but Halero was too determined a narrator to be interrupted by the broadest hint.

'Oh ay,' he resumed, with the self-satisfied air of one who has recovered the thread of a story, 'I was in my old lodgings in Russel Street, with old Timothy Thimblethwaite, the master fashioner, then the best-known man about town. He made for all the wits, and for the dull boobies of fortune besides, and made the one pay for the other. He never denied a wit credit save in jest, or for the sake of getting a repartee ; and he was in correspondence with all that was worth knowing about town. He had letters from Crowne, and Tate, and Prior, and Tom Brown, and all the famous fellows of the time, with such pellets of wit, that there was no reading them without laughing ready to die, and all ending with craving a further term for payment.'

'I should have thought the tailor would have found that jest rather serious,' said Mordaunt.

'Not a bit — not a bit,' replied his eulogist, 'Tim Thimblethwaite — he was a Cumberland man by birth — had the soul of a prince — ay, and died with the fortune of one ; for woe betide the custard-gorged alderman that came under Tim's goose, after he had got one of those letters — egad, he was sure to pay the kain ! Why, Thimblethwaite was thought to be the original of little Tom Bibber, in glorious John's comedy of the *Wild Gallant* ; and I know that he has trusted, ay, and lent John money to boot out his own pocket, at a time when all his fine court friends blew cold enough. He trusted me too, and I have been two months on the score at a time for my upper room. To be sure, I was obliging in his way — not that I exactly could shape or sew, nor would that have been decorous for a gentleman of good descent ; but I — eh, eh — I drew bills — summed up the books —'

'Carried home the clothes of the wits and aldermen, and got lodging for your labour ?' interrupted Cleveland.

'No, no — damn it, no,' replied Halero ; 'no such thing ; you put me out in my story — where was I ?'

'Nay, the devil help you to the latitude,' said the captain, extricating his button from the gripe of the unmerciful bard's finger and thumb, 'for I have no time to take an observation.' So saying, he bolted from the room.

'A silly, ill-bred, conceited fool,' said Halero, looking after

him; 'with as little manners as wit in his empty coxcomb. I wonder what Magnus and these silly wretches can see in him. He tells such damnable long-winded stories, too, about his adventures and sea-fights — every second word a lie, I doubt not. Mordaunt, my dear boy, take example by that man — that is, take warning by him — never tell long stories about yourself. You are sometimes given to talk too much about your own exploits on crags and skerries, and the like, which only breaks conversation, and prevents other folk from being heard. Now, I see you are impatient to hear out what I was saying. Stop, whereabouts was I?'

'I fear we must put it off, Mr. Halcro, until after dinner,' said Mordaunt, who also meditated his escape, though desirous of effecting it with more delicacy towards his old acquaintance than Captain Cleveland had thought it necessary to use.

'Nay, my dear boy,' said Halcro, seeing himself about to be utterly deserted, 'do not you leave me too: never take so bad an example as to set light by old acquaintance, Mordaunt. I have wandered many a weary step in my day; but they were always lightened when I could get hold of the arm of an old friend like yourself.'

So saying, he quitted the youth's coat, and sliding his hand gently under his arm, grappled him more effectually; to which Mordaunt submitted, a little moved by the poet's observation upon the unkindness of old acquaintances, under which he himself was an immediate sufferer. But when Halcro renewed his formidable question, 'Whereabouts was I?' Mordaunt, preferring his poetry to his prose, reminded him of the song which he said he had written upon his first leaving Zetland — a song to which, indeed, the inquirer was no stranger, but which, as it must be new to the reader, we shall here insert as a favourable specimen of the poetical powers of this tuneful descendant of Haco the Golden-mouthed: for, in the opinion of many tolerable judges, he held a respectable rank among the inditers of madrigals of the period, and was as well qualified to give immortality to his Nancies of the hills or dales as many a gentle sonnetteer of wit and pleasure about town. He was something of a musician also, and on the present occasion seized upon a sort of lute, and, quitting his victim, prepared the instrument for an accompaniment, speaking all the while, that he might lose no time.

'I learned the 'note,' he said, 'from the same man who taught honest Shadwell — plump Tom, as they used to call him

— somewhat roughly treated by the glorious John, you remember — Mordaunt, you remember —

Methinks I see the new Arion sail,
The lute still trembling underneath thy nail ;
At thy well-sharpen'd thumb, from shore to shore,
The trebles squeak for fear, the basses roar.

Come, I am indifferently in tune now. What was it to be ? Ay, I remember — nay, "The Lass of Northmaven" is the ditty ^{poor} Bet Stimbister ! I have called her Mary in the verses. Betsy does well for an English song ; but Mary is more natural here. So saying, after a short prelude, he sung, with a tolerable voice and some taste, the following verses : —

MARY

Farewell to Northmaven,
Grey Hillawicke, farewell !
To the calms of thy haven,
The storms on thy fell,
To each breeze that can vary
The mood of thy main,
And to thee, bounny Mary !
We meet not again.

Farewell the wild ferry,
Which Hacon could brave,
When the peaks of the skerry
Were white in the wave.
There 's a maid may look over
These wild waves in vain
For the skiff of her lover :
He comes not again.

The vows thou hast broke,
On the wild currents fling them ;
On the quicksand and rock
Let the mermaidens sing them.
New sweetness they 'll give her
Bewildering strain ;
But there 's one who will never
Believe them again.

Oh were there an island,
Though ever so wild,
Where woman could smile, and
No man be beguiled ;
Too tempting a snare
To poor mortals were given,
And the hope would fix there,
That should anchor on heaven !

'I see you are softened, my young friend,' said Halcro, when he had finished his song ; 'so are most who hear that same ditty. Words and music both mine own ; and, without saying much of the wit of it, there is a sort of eh — eh — simplicity and truth about it which gets its way to most folks' heart. Even your father cannot resist it ; and he has a heart as impenetrable to poetry and song as Apollo himself could draw an arrow against. But then he has had some ill luck in his time with the women-folk, as is plain from his owing them such a grudge. Ay — ay, there the charm lies ; none of us but has felt the same sore in our day. But come, my dear boy, they are mustering in the hall, men and women both — plagues as they are, we should get on ill without them ; but before we go, only mark the last turn —

And the hope would fix there, —

that is, in the supposed island — a place which neither was nor will be, —

That should anchor on heaven.

Now you see, my good young man, there are here none of your heathenish rants, which Rochester, Etherege, and these wild fellows used to string together. A parson might sing the song, and his clerk bear the burden ; but there is the confounded bell — we must go now ; but never mind, we'll get into a quiet corner at night, and I'll tell you all about it.'

CHAPTER XIII

Full in the midst the polish'd table shines,
And the bright goblets, rich with generous wines ;
Now each partakes the feast, the wine prepares,
Portions the food, and each the portion shares ;
Nor till the rage of thirst and hunger ceased,
To the high host approach'd the sagacious guest.

Odyssey.

THE hospitable profusion of Magnus Troil's board, the number of guests who feasted in the hall, the much greater number of retainers, attendants, humble friends, and domestics of every possible description, who revelled without, with the multitude of the still poorer and less honoured assistants, who came from every hamlet or township within twenty miles round, to share the bounty of the munificent Udaller, were such as altogether astonished Triptolemus Yellowley, and made him internally doubt whether it would be prudent in him at this time, and amid the full glow of his hospitality, to propose to the host who presided over such a splendid banquet a radical change in the whole customs and usages of his country.

True, the sagacious Triptolemus felt conscious that he possessed in his own person wisdom far superior to that of all the assembled feasters, to say nothing of the landlord, against whose prudence the very extent of his hospitality formed, in Yellowley's opinion, sufficient evidence. But yet the Amphitryon with whom one dines holds, for the time at least, an influence over the minds of his most distinguished guests ; and if the dinner be in good style and the wines of the right quality, it is humbling to see that neither art nor wisdom, scarce external rank itself, can assume their natural and wonted superiority over the distributor of these good things, until coffee has been brought in. Triptolemus felt the full weight of this temporary superiority, yet he was desirous to do something that might vindicate the vaunts he had made to his sister and his fellow-

traveller, and he stole a look at them from time to time, to mark whether he was not sinking in their esteem from postponing his promised lecture on the enormities of Zetland.

But Mrs. Barbara was busily engaged in noting and registering the waste incurred in such an entertainment as she had probably never before looked upon, and in admiring the host's indifference to, and the guests' absolute negligence of, those rules of civility in which her youth had been brought up. The feasters desired to be helped from a dish which was unbroken, and might have figured at supper, with as much freedom as if it had undergone the ravages of half a dozen guests; and no one seemed to care — the landlord himself least of all — whether those dishes only were consumed which, from their nature, were incapable of reappearance, or whether the assault was extended to the substantial rounds of beef, pasties, and so forth, which, by the rules of good housewifery, were destined to stand two attacks, and which, therefore, according to Mrs. Barbara's ideas of politeness, ought not to have been annihilated by the guests upon the first onset, but spared, like *Outis* in the cave of *Polyphemus*, to be devoured the last. Lost in the meditations to which these breaches of convivial discipline gave rise, and in the contemplation of an ideal larder of cold meat which she could have saved out of the wreck of roast, boiled, and baked, sufficient to have supplied her cupboard for at least a twelvemonth, Mrs. Barbara cared very little whether or not her brother supported in its extent the character which he had calculated upon assuming.

Mordaunt Mertoun also was conversant with far other thoughts than those which regarded the proposed reformer of Zetland enormities. His seat was betwixt two blithe maidens of *Thule*, who, not taking scorn that he had upon other occasions given preference to the daughters of the *Udaller*, were glad of the chance which assigned to them the attentions of so distinguished a gallant, who, as being their squire at the feast, might in all probability become their partner in the subsequent dance. But, whilst rendering to his fair neighbours all the usual attentions which society required, Mordaunt kept up a covert, but accurate and close, observation upon his estranged friends, *Minna* and *Brenda*. The *Udaller* himself had a share of his attention; but in him he could remark nothing, except the usual tone of hearty and somewhat boisterous hospitality with which he was accustomed to animate the banquet upon all such occasions of general festivity. But in the differing

mien of the two maidens there was much more room for painful remark.

Captain Cleveland sat betwixt the sisters, was sedulous in his attentions to both, and Mordaunt was so placed that he could observe all, and hear a great deal, of what passed between them. But Cleveland's peculiar regard seemed devoted to the elder sister. Of this the younger was perhaps conscious, for more than once her eye glanced towards Mordaunt, and, as he thought, with something in it which resembled regret for the interruption of their intercourse, and a sad remembrance of former and more friendly times; while Minna was exclusively engrossed by the attentions of her neighbour; and that it should be so, filled Mordaunt with surprise and resentment.

Minna, the serious, the prudent, the reserved, whose countenance and manners indicated so much elevation of character — Minna, the lover of solitude, and of those paths of knowledge in which men walk best without company — the enemy of light mirth, the friend of musing melancholy, and the frequenter of fountain-heads and pathless glens — she whose character seemed, in short, the very reverse of that which might be captivated by the bold, coarse, and daring gallantry of such a man as this Captain Cleveland, gave, nevertheless, her ear and eye to him, as he sat beside her at table, with an interest and a graciousness of attention which, to Mordaunt, who well knew how to judge of her feelings by her manner, intimated a degree of the highest favour. He observed this, and his heart rose against the favourite by whom he had been thus superseded, as well as 'What is there about the man,' he said within himself, against Minna's indiscreet departure from her own character.

'more than the bold and daring assumption of importance which is derived from success in petty enterprises, and the exercise of petty despotism over a ship's crew? His very language is more professional than is used by the superior officers of the British navy; and the wit which has excited so many smiles seems to me such as Minna would not formerly have endured for an instant. Even Brenda seems less taken with his gallantry than Minna, whom it should have suited so little.'

Mordaunt was doubly mistaken in these his angry speculations. In the first place, with an eye which was, in some respects, that of a rival, he criticised far too severely the manners and behaviour of Captain Cleveland. They were unpolished, certainly; which was of the less consequence in a country inhabited by so plain and simple a race as the ancient

Zetlanders. On the other hand, there was an open, naval frankness in Cleveland's bearing, much natural shrewdness, some appropriate humour, and undoubting confidence in himself, and that enterprising hardihood of disposition which, without any other recommendable quality, very often leads to success with the fair sex. But Mordaunt was farther mistaken in supposing that Cleveland was likely to be disagreeable to Minna Troil, on account of the opposition of their characters in so many material particulars. Had his knowledge of the world been a little more extensive, he might have observed that, as unions are often formed betwixt couples differing in complexion and stature, they take place more frequently betwixt persons totally differing in feelings, in taste, in pursuits, and in understanding; and it would not be saying, perhaps, too much, to aver that two-thirds of the marriages around us have been contracted betwixt persons who, judging *à priori*, we should have thought had scarce any charms for each other.

A moral and primary cause might be easily assigned for these anomalies, in the wise dispensations of Providence, that the general balance of wit, wisdom, and amiable qualities of all kinds should be kept up through society at large. For, what a world were it if the wise were to intermarry only with the wise, the learned with the learned, the amiable with the amiable, nay, even the handsome with the handsome? and, is it not evident, that the degraded castes of the foolish, the ignorant, the brutal, and the deformed (comprehending, by the way, far the greater portion of mankind), must, when condemned to exclusive intercourse with each other, become gradually as much brutalised in person and disposition as so many ourang-outangs? When, therefore, we see the 'gentle joined to the rude,' we may lament the fate of the suffering individual, but we must not the less admire the mysterious disposition of that wise Providence which thus balances the moral good and evil of life; which secures for a family, unhappy in the dispositions of one parent, a share of better and sweeter blood, transmitted from the other, and preserves to the offspring the affectionate care and protection of at least one of those from whom it is naturally due. Without the frequent occurrence of such alliances and unions, mis-sorted as they seem at first sight, the world could not be that for which Eternal Wisdom has designed it — a place of mixed good and evil, a place of trial at once and of suffering, where even the worst ills are

checkered with something that renders them tolerable to humble and patient minds, and where the best blessings carry with them a necessary alloy of imbittering depreciation.

When, indeed, we look a little closer on the causes of those unexpected and ill-suited attachments, we have occasion to acknowledge that the means by which they are produced do not infer that complete departure from, or inconsistency with, the character of the parties which we might expect when the result alone is contemplated. The wise purposes which Providence appears to have had in view, by permitting such intermixture of dispositions, tempers, and understandings in the married state, are not accomplished by any mysterious impulse by which, in contradiction to the ordinary laws of nature, men or women are urged to an union with those whom the world see to be unsuitable to them. The freedom of will is permitted to us in the occurrences of ordinary life, as in our moral conduct; and in the former as well as the latter case is often the means of misguiding those who possess it. Thus it usually happens, more especially to the enthusiastic and imaginative, that, having formed a picture of admiration in their own mind, they too often deceive themselves by some faint resemblance in some existing being, whom their fancy, as speedily as gratuitously, invests with all the attributes necessary to complete the *beau idéal* of mental perfection. No one, perhaps, even in the happiest marriage, with an object really beloved, ever discovered by experience all the qualities he expected to possess; but in far too many cases he finds he has practised a much higher degree of mental deception, and has erected his airy castle of felicity upon some rainbow, which owed its very existence only to the peculiar state of the atmosphere.

Thus Mordaunt, if better acquainted with life and with the course of human things, would have been little surprised that such a man as Cleveland, handsome, bold, and animated—a man who had obviously lived in danger, and who spoke of it as sport, should have been invested, by a girl of Minna's fanciful disposition, with an extensive share of those qualities which, in her active imagination, were held to fill up the accomplishments of a heroic character. The plain bluntness of his manner, if remote from courtesy, appeared at least as widely different from deceit; and, unfashioned as he seemed by forms, he had enough both of natural sense and natural good-breeding to support the delusion he had created, at least as far as externals were concerned. It is scarce necessary to

add, that these observations apply exclusively to what are called love-matches; for when either party fix their attachment upon the substantial comforts of a rental or a jointure, they cannot be disappointed in the acquisition, although they may be cruelly so in their over-estimation of the happiness it was to afford, or in having too slightly anticipated the disadvantages with which it was to be attended.

Having a certain partiality for the dark beauty whom we have described, we have willingly dedicated this digression, in order to account for a line of conduct which we allow to seem absolutely unnatural in such a narrative as the present, though the most common event in ordinary life; namely, in Minna's appearing to have over-estimated the taste, talent, and ability of a handsome young man, who was dedicating to her his whole time and attention, and whose homage rendered her the envy of almost all the other young women of that numerous party. Perhaps, if our fair readers will take the trouble to consult their own bosoms, they will be disposed to allow that the distinguished good taste exhibited by any individual who, when his attentions would be agreeable to a whole circle of rivals, selects *one* as their individual object, entitles him, on the footing of reciprocity, if on no other, to a large share of that individual's favourable, and even partial, esteem. At any rate, if the character shall, after all, be deemed inconsistent and unnatural, it concerns not us, who record the facts as we find them, and pretend no privilege for bringing closer to nature those incidents which may seem to diverge from it, or for reducing to consistence that most inconsistent of all created things — the heart of a beautiful and admired female.

Necessity, which teaches all the liberal arts, can render us also adepts in dissimulation; and Mordaunt, though a novice, failed not to profit in her school. It was manifest that, in order to observe the demeanour of those on whom his attention was fixed, he must needs put constraint on his own, and appear, at least, so much engaged with the damsels betwixt whom he sat that Minna and Brenda should suppose him indifferent to what was passing around him. The ready cheerfulness of Maddie and Clara Groatsettars, who were esteemed considerable fortunes in the island, and were at this moment too happy in feeling themselves seated somewhat beyond the sphere of vigilance influenced by their aunt, the good old Lady Glowrowrum, met and requited the attempts which Mordaunt made to be lively and entertaining; and they were soon engaged in

a gay conversation, to which, as usual on such occasions, the gentleman contributed wit, or what passes for such, and the ladies their prompt laughter and liberal applause. But, amidst this seeming mirth, Mordaunt failed not, from time to time, as covertly as he might, to observe the conduct of the two daughters of Magnus; and still it appeared as if the elder, wrapt up in the conversation of Cleveland, did not cast away a thought on the rest of the company; and as if Brenda, more openly as she conceived his attention withdrawn from her, looked with an expression both anxious and melancholy towards the group, of which he himself formed a part. He was much moved by the diffidence, as well as the trouble, which her looks seemed to convey, and tacitly formed the resolution of seeking a more full explanation with her in the course of the evening. Norma, he remembered, had stated that these two amiable young women were in danger, the nature of which she left unexplained, but which he suspected to arise out of their mistaking the character of this daring and all-engrossing stranger; and he secretly resolved that, if possible, he would be the means of detecting Cleveland and of saving his early friends.

As he revolved these thoughts, his attention to the Miss Groatsettars gradually diminished, and perhaps he might altogether have forgotten the necessity of his appearing an uninterested spectator of what was passing, had not the signal been given for the ladies retiring from table. Minna, with a native grace, and somewhat of stateliness in her manner, bent her head to the company in general, with a kinder and more particular expression as her eye reached Cleveland. Brenda, with the blush which attended her slightest personal exertion when exposed to the eyes of others, hurried through the same departing salutation with an embarrassment which almost amounted to awkwardness, but which her youth and timidity rendered at once natural and interesting. Again Mordaunt thought that her eye distinguished him amongst the numerous company. For the first time he ventured to encounter and to return the glance; and the consciousness that he had done so doubled the glow of Brenda's countenance, while something resembling displeasure was blended with her emotion.

When the ladies had retired, the men betook themselves to the deep and serious drinking which, according to the fashion of the times, preceded the evening exercise of the dance. Old Magnus himself, by precept and example, exhorted them 'to make the best use of their time, since the ladies would soon

summon them to shake their feet.' At the same time giving the signal to a grey-headed domestic, who stood behind him in the dress of a Dantzic skipper, and who added to many other occupations that of butler, 'Eric Scambester,' he said, 'has the good ship the "Jolly Mariner of Canton" got her cargo on board?'

'Chokeful loaded,' answered the Ganymede of Burgh-Westra, 'with good Nantz, Jamaica sugar, Portugal lemons, not to mention nutmeg and toast, and water taken in from the Shellcoat spring.'

Loud and long laughed the guests at this stated and regular jest betwixt the Udaller and his butler, which always served as a preface to the introduction of a punch-bowl of enormous size, the gift of the captain of one of the Honourable East India Company's vessels, which, bound from China homeward, had been driven north about by stress of weather into Løerwick Bay, and had there contrived to get rid of part of the cargo, without very scrupulously reckoning for the king's duties.

Magnus Troil, having been a large customer, besides otherwise obliging Captain Coolie, had been remunerated, on the departure of the ship, with this splendid vehicle of conviviality, at the very sight of which, as old Eric Scambester bent under its weight, a murmur of applause ran through the company. The good old toasts dedicated to the prosperity of Zetland were then honoured with flowing bumpers. 'Death to the head that never wears hair!' was a sentiment quaffed to the success of the fishing, as proposed by the sonorous voice of the Udaller. Claud Halero proposed, with general applause, 'The health of the worthy landmaster, the sweet sister meat-mistresses; health to the man, death to fish, and growth to the produce of the land!' The same recurring sentiment was proposed more comically by a white-headed compeer of Magnus Troil, in the words, 'God open the mouth of the grey fish, and keep his hand about the corn!'¹

Full opportunity was afforded to all to honour these interesting toasts. Those nearest the capacious Mediterranean of punch were accommodated by the Udaller with their portions, dispensed in huge rummer glasses by his own hospitable hand, whilst they who sat at a greater distance replenished their cups by means of a rich silver flagon, facetiously called the pinnace; which, filled occasionally at the bowl, served to dispense its liquid treasures to the more remote parts of the table, and occa-

¹ See Hilbert's *Description of the Zetland Islands*, p. 470.

sioned many right merry jests on its frequent voyages. The commerce of the Zetlanders with foreign vessels and homeward-bound West Indiamen had early served to introduce among them the general use of the generous beverage with which the 'Jolly Mariner of Canton' was loaded; and there was there a man in the archipelago of Thule more skilled in combining its rich ingredients than old Eric Scambester, who, indeed, was known far and wide through the isles by the name of the Punch-maker, after the fashion of the ancient Norwegians, who conferred on Rollo the Walker, and other heroes of their strain, epithets expressive of the feats of strength or dexterity in which they excelled all other men.

The good liquor was not slow in performing its office of exhilaration, and, as the revel advanced, some ancient Norse drinking-songs were sung with great effect by the guests, tending to show that if, from want of exercise, the martial virtues of their ancestors had decayed among the Zetlanders, they could still actively and intensely enjoy so much of the pleasures of Valhalla as consisted in quaffing the oceans of mead and brown ale which were promised by Odin to those who should share his Scandinavian paradise. At length, excited by the cup and song, the diffident grew bold and the modest loquacious; all became desirous of talking, and none were willing to listen; each man mounted his own special hobby-horse, and began eagerly to call on his neighbours to witness his agility. Amongst others, the little bard, who had now got next to our friend Mordaunt Mertoun, evinced a positive determination to commence and conclude, in all its longitude and latitude, the story of his introduction to glorious John Dryden; and Triptolemus Yellowley, as his spirits arose, shaking off a feeling of involuntary awe with which he was impressed by the opulence indicated in all he saw around him, as well as by the respect paid to Magnus Troil by the assembled guests, began to brouch to the astonished and somewhat offended Udaller some of those projects for ameliorating the islands which he had boasted of to his fellow-travellers upon their journey of the morning.

But the innovations which he suggested, and the reception which they met with at the hand of Magnus Troil, must be told in the next chapter.

CHAPTER XIV

We'll keep our customs ; what is law itself,
But old establish'd custom ? What religion
(I mean, with one-half of the men that use it),
Save the good use and wont that carries them
To worship how and where their fathers worshipp'd ?
All things resolve in custom ; we'll keep ours.

Old Play.

WE left the company of Magrus Troil engaged in high wassail and revelry. Mordaunt, who, like his father, shunned the festive cup, did not partake in the cheerfulness which the ship diffused among the guests as they unloaded it, and the pinnace, as it circumnavigated the table. But, in low spirits as he seemed, he was the more meet prey for the story-telling Halcro, who had fixed upon him as in a favourable state to play the part of listener, with something of the same instinct that directs the hooded crow to the sick sheep among the flock, which will most patiently suffer itself to be made a prey of. Joyfully did the poet avail himself of the advantages afforded by Mordaunt's absence of mind and unwillingness to exert himself in measures of active defence. With the unfailing dexterity peculiar to prosers, he contrived to dribble out his tale to double its usual length, by the exercise of the privilege of unlimited digressions ; so that the story, like a horse on the *grand pas*, seemed to be advancing with rapidity, while, in reality, it scarce was progressive at the rate of a yard in the quarter of an hour. At length, however, he had discussed, in all its various bearings and relations, the history of his friendly landlord, the master fashioner in Russel Street, including a short sketch of five of his relations, and anecdotes of three of his principal rivals, together with some general observations upon the dress and fashion of the period ; and having marched thus far through the environs and outworks of his story, he arrived at the body of the place, for so the Wits' Coffee-house might be termed. He paused on the threshold, however,

to explain the nature of his landlord's right occasionally to intrude himself into this well-known temple of the Muses.

'It consisted,' said Halero, 'in the two principal points of bearing and forbearing; for my friend Thimblethwaite was a person of wit himself, and never quarrelled with any jest which the wags who frequented that house were flinging about, like squibs and crackers on a rejoicing-night; and then, though some of the wits — ay, and I daresay the greater number, might have had some dealings with him in the way of trade, he never was the person to put any man of genius in unpleasant remembrance of such trifles. And though, my dear young Master Mordaunt, you may think this is but ordinary civility, because in this country it happens seldom that there is either much borrowing or lending, and because, praised be Heaven, there are neither bailiffs nor sheriff-officers to take a poor fellow by the neck, and because there are no prisons to put him into when they have done so, yet, let me tell you, that such a lamb-like forbearance as that of my poor, dear, deceased landlord, Thimblethwaite, is truly uncommon within the London bills of mortality. I could tell you of such things that have happened even to myself, as well as others, with these cursed London tradesmen, as would make your hair stand on end. But what the devil has put old Magnus into such note? He shouts as if he were trying his voice against a north-west gale of wind.'

Loud indeed was the roar of the old Udaller, as, worn out of patience by the schemes of improvement which the factor was now undauntedly pressing upon his consideration, he answered him (to use an Ossianic phrase) like a wave upon a rock.

'Trees, sir factor — talk not to me of trees! I care not though there never be one on the island tall enough to hang a coxcomb upon. We will have no trees but those that rise in our havens — the good trees that have yards for boughs and standing rigging for leaves.'

'But touching the draining of the lake of Braebaster, whereof I spoke to you, Master Magnus 'Troil,' answered the persevering agriculturist, 'whilk I opine would be of so much consequence, there are two ways — down the Linklater glen, or by the Scal-mester burn. Now, having taken the level of both —'

'There is a third way, Master Yellowley,' answered the landlord.

'I profess I can see none,' replied Triptolemus, with as much good faith as a joker could desire in the subject of his wit, 'in respect that the hill called Braebaster on the south, and ane

high bank on the north, of whilk I cannot carry the name rightly in my head —

‘Do not tell us of hills and banks, Master Yellowley; there is a third way of draining the loch, and it is the only way that shall be tried in my day. You say my Lord Chamberlain and I are the joint proprietors; so be it. Let each of us start an equal proportion of brandy, lime-juice, and sugar into the loch — a ship’s cargo or two will do the job — let us assemble all the jolly udallers of the country, and in twenty-four hours you shall see dry ground where the loch of Braebaster now is.’

A loud laugh of applause, which for a time actually silenced Triptolemus, attended a jest so very well suited to time and place — a jolly toast was given — a merry song was sung — the ship unloaded her sweets — the pinnace made its genial rounds — the duet betwixt Magnus and Triptolemus, which had attracted the attention of the whole company from its superior vehemence, now once more sunk, and merged into the general hum of the convivial table, and the poet Halero again resumed his usurped possession of the ear of Mordaunt Mertoun.

‘Whereabouts was I?’ he said, with a tone which expressed to his weary listener more plainly than words could how much of his desultory tale yet remained to be told. ‘Oh, I remember — we were just at the door of the Wits’ Coffee-house; it was set up by one —’

‘Nay, but, my dear Master Halero,’ said his hearer, somewhat impatiently, ‘I am desirous to hear of your meeting with Dryden.’

‘What, with glorious John? — true — ay — where was I? At the Wits’ Coffee-house. Well, in at the door we got — the waiters, and so forth, staring at me; for as to Thimblethwaite, honest fellow, his was a well-known face. I can tell you a story about that —’

‘Nay, but John Dryden?’ said Mordaunt, in a tone which deprecated further digression.

‘Ay — ay, glorious John — where was I? Well, as we stood close by the bar, where one fellow sat grinding of coffee, and another putting up tobacco into penny parcels — a pipe and a dish cost just a penny — then and there it was that I had the first peep of him. One Dennis sat near him, who —’

‘Nay, but John Dryden — what like was he?’ demanded Mordaunt.

‘Like a little fat old man, with his own grey hair, and in a full-trimmed black suit, that sat close as a glove. Honest

Thimblethwaite let no one but himself shape for glorious John, and he had a slashing hand at a sleeve, I promise you. But there is no getting a mouthful of common sense spoken here : d—n that Scotchman, he and old Magnus are at it again !

It was very true ; and although the interruption did not resemble a thunder-clap, to which the former stentorian exclamation of the Udaller might have been likened, it was a close and clamorous dispute, maintained by question, answer, retort, and repartee, as closely huddled upon each other as the sounds which announce from a distance a close and sustained fire of musketry.

‘Hear reason, sir ?’ said the Udaller ; ‘we will hear reason, and speak reason too ; and if reason fall short, you shall have rhyme to boot. Ha, my little friend Halero !’

Though cut off in the middle of his best story, if that could be said to have a middle which had neither beginning nor end, the bard bristled up at the summons, like a corps of light infantry when ordered up to the support of the grenadiers, looked smart, slapped the table with his hand, and denoted his becoming readiness to back his hospitable landlord, as becomes a well-entertained guest. Triptolemus was a little daunted at this reinforcement of his adversary : he paused, like a cautious general, in the sweeping attack which he had commenced on the peculiar usages of Zetland, and spoke not again until the Udaller poked him with the insulting query, ‘Where is your reason now, Master Yellowley, that you were deafening me with a moment since ?’

‘Be but patient, worthy sir,’ replied the agriculturist. ‘What on earth can you or any other man say in defence of that thing you call a plough, in this blinded country ? Why, even the savage Highlandmen, in Caithness and Sutherland, can make more work, and better, with their gascromh, or whatever they call it.’

‘But what ails you at it, sir ?’ said the Udaller : ‘let me hear your objections to it. It tills our land, and what would ye more ?’

‘It hath but one handle or stilt,’ replied Triptolemus.

‘And who the devil,’ said the poet, aiming at something smart, ‘would wish to need a pair of stilts if he can manage to walk with a single one ?’

‘Or tell me,’ said Magnus Troil, ‘how it were possible for Neil of Lupness, that lost one arm by his fall from the crag of Nekbreckan, to manage a plough with two handles ?’

'The harness is of raw seal-skin,' said Triptolemus.

'It will save dressed leather,' answered Magnus Troil.

'It is drawn by four wretched bullocks,' said the agriculturist, 'that are yoked breast-fashion; and two women must follow this unhappy instrument, and complete the furrows with a couple of shovels.'

'Drink about, Master Yellowley,' said the Udaller; 'and, as you say in Scotland, "never fash your thumb." Our cattle are too high-spirited to let one go before the other; our men are too gentle and well-nurtured to take the working-field without the women's company; our ploughs till our land, our land bears us barley; we brew our ale, eat our bread, and make strangers welcome to their share of it. Here's to you, Master Yellowley.'

This was said in a tone meant to be decisive of the question; and, accordingly, Halero whispered to Mordaunt, 'That has settled the matter, and now we will get on with glorious John. There he sat in his suit of full-trimmed black — two years due was the bill, as mine honest landlord afterwards told me — and such an eye in his head! None of your burning, blighting, falcon eyes, which we poets are apt to make a rout about, but a soft, full, thoughtful, yet penetrating glance — never saw the like of it in my life, unless it were little Stephen Kleancogg's, the fiddler, at Papastow, who —'

'Nay, but John Dryden?' said Mordaunt, who, for want of better amusement, had begun to take a sort of pleasure in keeping the old gentleman to his narrative, as men herd in a restive sheep, when they wish to catch him. He returned to his theme, with his usual phrase of 'Ay, true — glorious John. Well, sir, he cast his eye, such as I have described it, on my landlord, and "Honest Tim," said he, "what hast thou got here?" and all the wits, and lords, and gentlemen that used to crowd round him, like the wenches round a pedlar at a fair, they made way for us, and up we came to the fireside, where he had his own established chair — I have heard it was carried to the balcony in summer, but it was by the fireside when I saw it — so up came Tim Thimblethwaite, through the midst of them, as bold as a lion, and I followed with a small parcel under my arm, which I had taken up partly to oblige my landlord, as the shop porter was not in the way, and partly that I might be thought to have something to do there, for you are to think there was no admittance at the Wits' for strangers who had no business there. I have heard that Sir Charles Sedley said a good thing about that —'

'Nay, but you forget glorious John,' said Mordaunt.

'Ay, glorious you may well call him. They talk of their Blackmore, and Shadwell, and such-like — not fit to tie the latchets of John's shoes. "Well," he said to my landlord, "what have you got there?" and he, bowing, I warrant, lower than he would to a duke, said he had made bold to come and show him the stuff which Lady Elizabeth had chose for her nightgown. "And which of your geese is that, Tim, who has got it tucked under his wing?" "He is an Orkney goose, if it please you, Mr. Dryden," said Tim, who had wit at will, "and he hath brought you a copy of verses for your honour to look at." "Is he amphibious?" said glorious John, taking the paper, and methought I could rather have faced a battery of cannon than the crackle it gave as it opened, though he did not speak in a way to dash one neither; and then he looked at the verses, and he was pleased to say, in a very encouraging way indeed, with a sort of good-humoured smile on his face, and certainly for a fat elderly gentleman — for I would not compare it to Minna's smile or Brenda's — he had the pleasantest smile I ever saw — "Why, Tim," he said, "this goose of yours will prove a swan on your hands." With that he smiled a little, and they all laughed, and none louder than those who stood too far off to hear the jest; for every one knew when he smiled there was something worth laughing at, and so took it upon trust; and the word passed through among the young Templars, and the wits, and the smarts, and there was nothing but question on question who we were; and one French fellow was trying to tell them it was only Monsieur Tim Thimblethwaite; but he made such work with his Dumbletate and Timbletate that I thought his explanation would have lasted —'

'As long as your own story,' thought Mordaunt; but the narrative was at length finally cut short by the strong and decided voice of the Udaller.

'I will hear no more on it, Mr. Factor!' he exclaimed.

'At least let me say something about the breed of horses,' said Yellowley, in rather a cry-mercy tone of voice. 'Your horses, my dear sir, resemble cats in size and tigers in devilry.'

'For their size,' said Magnus, 'they are the easier for us to get off and on them ('As Triptolemus experienced this morning,' thought Mordaunt to himself), and as for their devilry, let no one mount them that cannot manage them.'

A twinge of self-conviction on the part of the agriculturist prevented him from reply. He darted a deprecatory glance at Mordaunt, as if for the purpose of imploring secrecy respecting

his tumble; and the Udaller, who saw his advantage, although he was not aware of the cause, pursued it with the high and stern tone proper to one who had all his life been unaccustomed to meet with, and unapt to endure, opposition.

'By the blood of St. Magnus the Martyr,' he said, 'but you are a fine fellow, Master Factor Yellowley! You come to us from a strange land, understanding neither our laws, nor our manners, nor our language, and you propose to become governor of the country, and that we should all be your slaves!'

'My pupils, worthy sir — my pupils!' said Yellowley, 'and that only for your own proper advantage.'

'We are too old to go to school,' said the Zetlander. 'I tell you once more, we will sow and reap our grain as our fathers did; we will eat what God sends us, with our doors open to the stranger, even as theirs were open. If there is aught imperfect in our practice, we will amend it in time and season; but the blessed Baptist's holiday was made for light hearts and quick heels. He that speaks a word more of reason, as you call it, or anything that looks like it, shall swallow a pint of sea-water — he shall, by this hand! And so fill up the good ship, the "Jolly Mariner of Canton," once more, for the benefit of those that will stick by her; and let the rest have a fling with the fiddlers, who have been summoning us this hour. I will warrant every wench is on tiptoe by this time. Come, Mr. Yellowley, no unkindness, man; why, man, thou feelest the rolling of the "Jolly Mariner" still (for, in truth, honest Triptolemus showed a little unsteadiness of motion as he rose to attend his host); but never mind, we shall have thee find thy land-legs to reel it with yonder bonny belles. Come along, Triptolemus; let me grapple thee fast, lest thou *trip*, old Triptolemus — ha, ha, ha!'

So saying, the portly though weather-beaten hulk of the Udaller sailed off like a man-of-war that had braved a hundred gales, having his guest in tow like a recent prize. The greater part of the revellers followed their leader with loud jubilee, although there were several stanch toppers who, taking the option left them by the Udaller, remained behind to relieve the "Jolly Mariner" of a fresh cargo, amidst many a pledge to the health of their absent landlord, and to the prosperity of his roof-tree, with whatsoever other wishes of kindness could be devised as an apology for another pint-bumper of noble punch.

The rest soon thronged the dancing-room, an apartment which partook of the simplicity of the time and of the country. Drawing-rooms and saloons were then unknown in Scotland, save in the houses of the nobility, and of course absolutely so in Zetland; but a long, low, anomalous store-room, sometimes used for the deposition of merchandise, sometimes for putting aside lumber, and a thousand other purposes, was well known to all the youth of Dunrossness, and of many a district besides, as the scene of the merry dance, which was sustained with so much glee when Magnus Troil gave his frequent feasts.

The first appearance of this ball room might have shocked a fashionable party assembled for the quadrille or the waltz. Low as we have stated the apartment to be, it was but imperfectly illuminated by lamps, candles, ship-lanterns, and a variety of other candelabra, which served to throw a dusky light upon the floor, and upon the heaps of merchandise and miscellaneous articles which were piled around; some of them stores for the winter; some, goods destined for exportation; some, the tribute of Neptune, paid at the expense of shipwrecked vessels, whose owners were unknown; some, articles of barter received by the proprietor, who, like most others at the period, was somewhat of a merchant as well as a landholder, in exchange for the fish and other articles, the produce of his estate. All these, with the chests, boxes, casks, etc., which contained them, had been drawn aside, and piled one above the other, in order to give room for the dancers, who, light and lively as if they had occupied the most splendid saloon in the parish of St. James's, executed their national dances with equal grace and activity.

The group of old men who looked on bore no inconsiderable resemblance to a party of aged tritons, engaged in beholding the sports of the sea-nymphs; so hard a look had most of them acquired by contending with the elements, and so much did the shaggy hair and beards, which many of them cultivated after the ancient Norwegian fashion, give their heads the character of these supposed natives of the deep. The young people, on the other hand, were uncommonly handsome, tall, well-made, and shapely: the men with long fair hair, and, until broken by the weather, a fresh, ruddy complexion, which, in the females, was softened into a bloom of infinite delicacy. Their natural good ear for music qualified them to second to the utmost the exertions of a band whose strains were by no means contemptible; while the elders, who stood around or

sat quiet upon the old sea-chests which served for chairs, criticised the dancers, as they compared their execution with their own exertions in former days ; or, warmed by the cup and flagon, which continued to circulate among them, snapped their fingers and beat time with their feet to the music.

Mordaunt looked upon this scene of universal mirth with the painful recollection that he, thrust aside from his pre-eminence, no longer exercised the important duties of chief of the dancers, or office of leader of the revels, which had been assigned to the stranger Cleveland. Anxious, however, to suppress the feelings of his own disappointment, which he felt it was neither wise to entertain nor manly to display, he approached his fair neighbours to whom he had been so acceptable at table, with the purpose of inviting one of them to become his partner in the dance. But the awfully ancient old lady, even the Lady Glowrowrum, who had only tolerated the exuberance of her nieces' mirth during the time of dinner because her situation rendered it then impossible for her to interfere, was not disposed to permit the apprehended renewal of the intimacy implied in Mertoun's invitation. She therefore took upon herself, in the name of her two nieces, who sat pouting beside her in displeased silence, to inform Mordaunt, after thanking him for his civility, that the hands of her nieces were engaged for that evening ; and, as he continued to watch the party at a little distance, he had an opportunity of being convinced that the alleged engagement was a mere apology to get rid of him, when he saw the two good-humoured sisters join the dance under the auspices of the next young men who asked their hands. Incensed at so marked a slight, and unwilling to expose himself to another, Mordaunt Mertoun drew back from the circle of dancers, shrouded himself amongst the mass of inferior persons who crowded into the bottom of the room as spectators, and there, concealed from the observation of others, digested his own mortification as well as he could — that is to say, very ill — and with all the philosophy of his age — that is to say, with none at all.

CHAPTER XV

A torch for me ; let wantons, light of heart,
Tickle the useless rushes with their heels ;
For I am proverb'd with a grandaïre phrase —
I'll be a candle-holder, and look on.

Romeo and Juliet.

THE youth, says the moralist Johnson, cares not for the boy's hobby-horse, nor the man for the youth's mistress ; and therefore the distress of Mordaunt Mertoun, when excluded from the merry dance, may seem trifling to many of my readers, who would, nevertheless, think they did well to be angry if deposed from their usual place in an assembly of a different kind. There lacked not amusement, however, for those whom the dance did not suit, or who were not happy enough to find partners to their liking. Halero, now completely in his element, had assembled round him an audience, to whom he was declaiming his poetry with all the enthusiasm of glorious John himself, and receiving in return the usual degree of applause allowed to minstrels who recite their own rhymes — so long at least as the author is within hearing of the criticism. Halero's poetry might indeed have interested the antiquary as well as the admirer of the Muses, for several of his pieces were translations or imitations from the Scaldic sagas, which continued to be sung by the fishermen of these islands even until a very late period ; insomuch that, when Gray's poems first found their way to Orkney, the old people recognised at once, in the ode of the *Fatal Sisters*, the Runic rhymes which had amused or terrified their infancy under the title of the *Magicians*, and which the fishers of North Ronaldsha and other remote isles used still to sing when asked for a Norse ditty.¹

Half-listening, half-lost in his own reflections, Mordaunt Mertoun stood near the door of the apartment, and in the outer ring of the little circle formed around old Halero, while the bard chanted to a low, wild, monotonous air, varied only

¹ See note, p. 451.

by the efforts of the singer to give interest and emphasis to particular passages, the following imitation of a Northern war-song —

THE SONG OF HAROLD HARFAGER

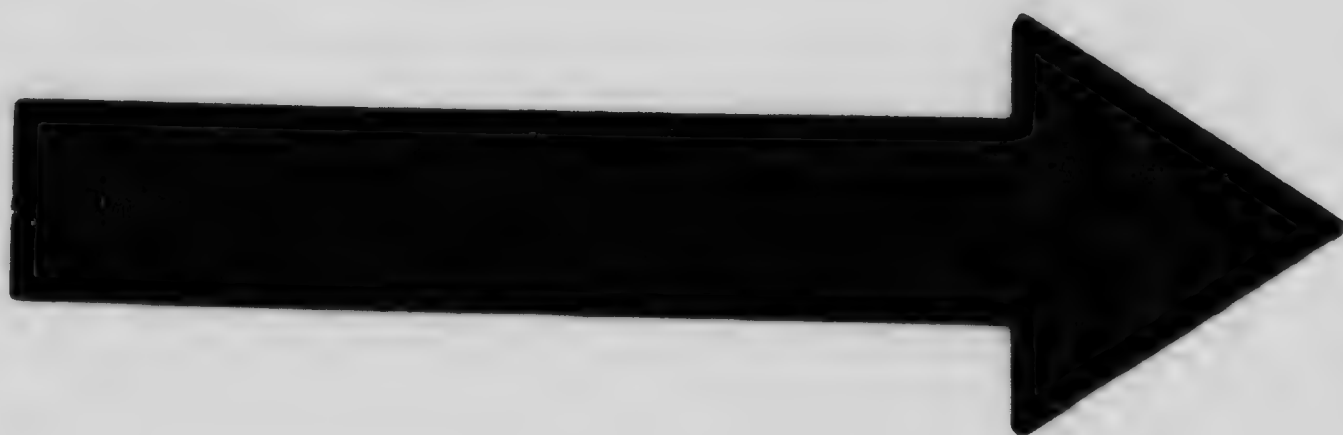
The sun is rising dimly red,
The wind is wailing low and dread ;
From his cliff the eagle sallies,
Leaves the wolf his darksome valleys ;
In the midst the ravens hover,
Peep the wild-dogs from the cover.
Screaming, croaking, baying, yelling,
Each in his wild accents telling,
' Soon we feast on dead and dying,
Fair-hair'd Harold's flag is flying.

Many a crest in air is streaming,
Many a helmet darkly gleaming,
Many an arm the axe uprears,
Doom'd to hew the wood of spears.
All along the crowded ranks,
Horses neigh and armour clanks ;
Chiefs are shouting, clarions ringing,
Louder still the bard is singing,
' Gather, footmen — gather, horsemen,
To the field, ye valiant Norsemen !

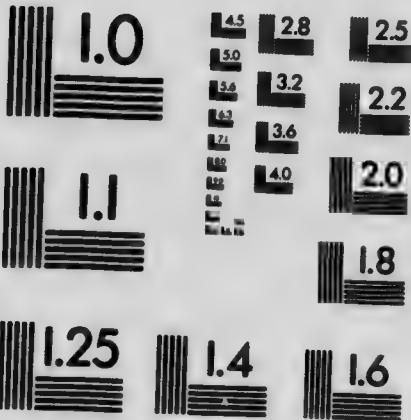
' Halt ye not for food or slumber,
View not vantage, count not number ;
Jolly reapers, forward still ;
Grow the crop on vale or hill,
Thick or scatter'd, stiff or lithe,
It shall down before the scythe.
Forward with your sickles bright,
Reap the harvest of the fight.
Onward, footmen — onward, horsemen,
To the charge, ye gallant Norsemen !

' Fatal Choosers of the Slaughter,
O'er you hovers Odin's daughter ;
Hear the choice she spreads before ye, —
Victory, and wealth, and glory ;
Or old Valhalla's roaring hail,
Her ever-circling mead and ale,
Where for eternity unite
The joys of wassail and of fight.
Headlong forward, foot and horsemen,
Charge and fight, and die like Norsemen !'

' The poor, unhappy, blinded heathens !' said Triptolemus, with a sigh deep enough for a groan ; ' they speak of their



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eternal cups of ale, and I question if they kend how to manage a croft land of grain !'

'The cleverer fellows they, neighbour Yellowley,' answered the poet, 'if they made ale without barley.'

'Barley! alack-a-day!' replied the more accurate agriculturist, 'who ever heard of barley in these parts? Bear, my dearest friend — bear is all they have, and wonderment it is to me that they ever see an awn of it. Ye scart the land with a bit thing ye ca' a pleugh; ye might as weel give it a ritt with the teeth of a redding-kame. Oh, to see the sock, and the heel, and the sole-clout of a real steady Scottish pleugh, with a chield like a Samson between the stilts, laying a weight on them would keep down a mountain; twa stately owsen, and as many broad-breasted horse in the traces, going through soil and till, and leaving a fur in the ground would carry off water like a causeyed syver! They that have seen a sight like that have seen something to crack about in another sort than those unhappy auld-warld stories of war and slaughter, of which the land has seen even but too mickle, for a' your singing and soughing awa' in praise of such bloodthirsty doings, Master Claud Halero.'

'It is a heresy,' said the animated little poet, bridling and drawing himself up, as if the whole defence of the Orcadian Archipelago rested on his single arm — 'it is a heresy so much as to name one's native country if a man is not prepared when and how to defend himself — ay, and to annoy another. The time has been that, if we made not good ale and aquavitæ, we knew well enough where to find that which was ready made to our hand; but now the descendants of sea-kings, and champions, and Berserkars are become as incapable of using their swords as if they were so many women. Ye may praise them for a strong pull on an oar or a sure foot on a skerry; but what else could glorious John himself say of ye, my good Hialtlanders, that any man would listen to?'

'Spoken like an angel, most noble poet,' said Cleveland, who, during an interval of the dance, stood near the party in which this conversation was held. 'The old champions you talked to us about yesternight were the men to make a harp ring — gallant fellows, that were friends to the sea and enemies to all that sailed on it. Their ships, I suppose, were clumsy enough; but if it is true that they went upon the account as far as the Levant, I scarce believe that ever better fellows unloosed a topsail.'

'Ay,' replied Halero, 'there you spoke them right. In those days none could call their life and means of living their own, unless they dwelt twenty miles out of sight of the blue sea. Why, they had public prayers put up in every church in Europe for deliverance from the ire of the Northmen. In France and England, ay, and in Scotland too, for as high as they hold their head nowadays, there was not a bay or a haven but it was freer to our forefathers than to the poor devils of natives; and now we cannot, forsooth, so much as grow our own barley without Scottish help (here he darted a sarcastic glance at the factor). I would I saw the time we were to measure arms with them again!'

'Spoken like a hero once more,' said Cleveland.

'Ah!' continued the little bard, 'I would it were possible to see our barks, once the water-dragons of the world, swimming with the black raven standard waving at the topmast, and their decks glimmering with arms, instead of being heaped up with stock-fish; winning with our fearless hands what the niggard soil denies; paying back all old scorn and modern injury; reaping where we never sowed, and felling what we never planted; living and laughing through the world, and smiling when we were summoned to quit it!'

So spoke Claud Halero, in no serious, or at least most certainly in no sober mood, his brain (never the most stable) whizzing under the influence of fifty well-remembered sagas, besides five bumpers of usquebaugh and brandy; and Cleveland, between jest and earnest, clapped him on the shoulder and again repeated, 'Spoken like a hero!'

'Spoken like a fool, I think,' said Magnus Troil, whose attention had been also attracted by the vehemence of the little bard. 'Where would you cruise upon, or against whom? We are all subjects of one realm, I trow, and I would have you to remember that your voyage may bring up at execution dock. I like not the Scots — no offence, Mr. Yellowley — that is, I would like them well enough if they would stay quiet in their own land, and leave us at peace with our own people, and manners, and fashions; and if they would but abide there till I went to harry them like a mad old Berserker, I would leave them in peace till the day of judgment. With what the sea sends us, and the land lends us, as the proverb says, and a set of honest neighbourly folks to help us to consume it, so help me, St. Magnus, as I think we are even but too happy!'

'I know what war is,' said an old man, 'and I would as

soon sail through Sumburgh Roost in a cockle-shell, or in a worse loom, as I would venture there again.'

'And, pray, what wars knew your valour?' said Halero, who, though forbearing to contradict his landlord from a sense of respect, was not a whit inclined to abandon his argument to any meaner authority.

'I was pressed,' answered the old triton, 'to serve under Montrose, when he came here about the sixteen hundred and fifty-one, and carried a sort of us off, will ye nill ye, to get our throats cut in the wilds of Strathnavern.¹ I shall never forget it. We had been hard put to it for victuals: what would I have given for a luncheon of Burgh-Westra beef — ay, or a mess of sour sillocks? When our Highlandmen brought in a dainty drove of kyloes, much ceremony there was not, for we shot and felled, and flayed, and roasted, and broiled, as it came to every man's hand; till, just as our beards were at the greasiest, we heard — God preserve us — a tramp of horse, then twa or three drapping shots — then came a full salvo — and then, when the officers were crying on us to stand, and maist of us looking which way we might run away, down they broke, horse and foot, with old John Urry, or Hurry,² or whatever they called him — he hurried us that day, and worried us to boot — and we began to fall as thick as the stots that we were felling five minutes before.'

'And Montrose,' said the soft voice of the graceful Minna — 'what became of Montrose, — how looked he?'

'Like a lion with the hunters before him,' answered the old gentleman; 'but I looked not twice his way, for my own lay right over the hill.'

'And so you left him?' said Minna, in a tone of the deepest contempt.

'It was no fault of mine, Mistress Minna,' answered the old man, somewhat out of countenance; 'but I was there with no choice of my own; and, besides, what good could I have done? all the rest were running like sheep, and why should I have staid?'

'You might have died with him,' said Minna.

'And lived with him to all eternity, in immortal verse!' added Claud Halero.

'I thank you, Mistress Minna,' replied the plain-dealing Zetlander, 'and I thank you, my old friend Claud; but I would rather drink both your healths in this good bicker of ale,

¹ See Montrose in Zetland. Note 19.

² See Note 20.

like a living man as I am, than that you should be making songs in my honour, for having died forty or fifty years ago. But what signified it? Run or fight, 't was all one: they took Montrose, poor fellow, for all his doughty deeds, and they took me that did no doughty deeds at all; and they hanged him, poor man, and as for me — —'

'I trust in Heaven they flogged and pickled you,' said Cleveland, worn out of patience with the dull narrative of the peaceful Zetlander's poltroonery, of which he seemed so wondrous little ashamed.

'Flog horses and pickle beef,' said Magnus. 'Why, you have not the vanity to think that, with all your quarter-deck airs, you will make poor old neighbour Haagen ashamed that he was not killed some scores of years since? You have looked on death yourself, my doughty young friend, but it was with the eyes of a young man who wishes to be thought of; but we are a peaceful people — peaceful, that is, as long as any one should be peaceful, and that is till some one has the impudence to wrong us or our neighbours; and then, perhaps, they may not find our Northern blood much cooler in our veins than was that of the old Scandinavians that gave us our names and lineage. Get ye along — get ye along to the sword-dance,¹ that the strangers that are amongst us may see that our hands and our weapons are not altogether unacquainted even yet.'

A dozen cutlasses, selected hastily from an old arm-chest, and whose rusted hue bespoke how seldom they left the sheath, armed the same number of young Zetlanders, with whom mingled six maidens, led by Minna Troil; and the minstrelsy instantly commenced a tune appropriate to the ancient Norwegian war-dance, the evolutions of which are perhaps still practised in those remote islands.

• The first movement was graceful and majestic, the youths holding their swords erect, and without much gesture; but the tune, and the corresponding motions of the dancers, became gradually more and more rapid; they clashed their swords together, in measured time, with a spirit which gave the exercise a dangerous appearance in the eye of the spectator, though the firmness, justice, and accuracy with which the dancers kept time with the stroke of their weapons did, in truth, ensure its safety. The most singular part of the exhibition was the courage exhibited by the female performers, who now, surrounded by the swordsmen, seemed like the Sabine maidens in

¹ See Note 21.

the hands of their Roman lovers ; now, moving under the arch of steel which the young men had formed by crossing their weapons over the heads of their fair partners, resembled the band of Amazons when they first joined in the Pyrrhic dance with the followers of Theseus. But by far the most striking and appropriate figure was that of Minna Troil, whom Halero had long since entitled the Queen of Swords, and who, indeed, moved amidst the swordsmen with an air which seemed to hold all the drawn blades as the proper accompaniments of her person and the implements of her pleasure. And when the mazes of the dance became more intricate, when the close and continuous clash of the weapons made some of her companions shrink and show signs of fear, her cheek, her lip, and her eye seemed rather to announce that, at the moment when the weapons flashed fastest and rung sharpest around her, she was most completely self-possessed and in her own element. Last of all, when the music had ceased, and she remained for an instant upon the floor by herself, as the rule of the dance required, the swordsmen and maidens who departed from around her seemed the guards and the train of some princess, who, dismissed by her signal, were leaving her for a time to solitude. Her own look and attitude, wrapped, as she probably was, in some vision of the imagination, corresponded admirably with the ideal dignity which the spectators ascribed to her : but, almost immediately recollecting herself, she blushed, as if conscious she had been, though but for an instant, the object of undivided attention, and gave her hand gracefully to Cleveland, who, though he had not joined in the dance, assumed the duty of conducting her to her seat.

As they passed, Mordaunt Mertoun might observe that Cleveland whispered into Minna's ear, and that her brief reply was accompanied with even more discomposure of countenance than she had manifested when encountering the gaze of the whole assembly. Mordaunt's suspicions were strongly awakened by what he observed, for he knew Minna's character well, and with what equanimity and indifference she was in the custom of receiving the usual compliments and gallantries with which her beauty and her situation rendered her sufficiently familiar.

'Can it be possible she really loves this stranger?' was the unpleasant thought that instantly shot across Mordaunt's mind. 'And if she does, what is my interest in the matter?' was the second ; and which was quickly followed by the reflec-

tion that, though he claimed no interest at any time but as a friend, and though that interest was now withdrawn, he was still, in consideration of their former intimacy, entitled both to be sorry and angry at her for throwing away her affections on one he judged unworthy of her. In this process of reasoning, it is probable that a little mortified vanity, or some indescribable shade of selfish regret, might be endeavouring to assume the disguise of disinterested generosity; but there is so much of base alloy in our very best (unassisted) thoughts, that it is melancholy work to criticise too closely the motives of our most worthy actions; at least we would recommend to every one to let those of his neighbours pass current, however narrowly he may examine the purity of his own.

The sword-dance was succeeded by various other specimens of the same exercise, and by songs, to which the singers lent their whole soul, while the audience were sure, as occasion offered, to unite in some favourite chorus. It is upon such occasions that music, though of a simple and even rude character, finds its natural empire over the generous bosom, and produces that strong excitement which cannot be attained by the most learned compositions of the first masters, which are caviare to the common ear, although, doubtless, they afford a delight, exquisite in its kind, to those whose natural capacity and education have enabled them to comprehend and relish those difficult and complicated combinations of harmony.

It was about midnight when a knocking at the door of the mansion, with the sound of the 'gue' and the 'langspiel,' announced, by their tinkling chime, the arrival of fresh revellers, to whom, according to the hospitable custom of the country, the apartments were instantly thrown open.

CHAPTER XVI

My mind misgives,
Some consequence, yet hanging in the stars,
Shall bitterly begin his fearful date
With this night's revels.

Romeo and Juliet.

THE new-comers were, according to the frequent custom of such frolickers all over the world, disguised in a sort of masquing habits, and designed to represent the tritons and mermaids with whom ancient tradition and popular belief have peopled the northern seas. The former, called by Zetlanders at that time 'shoupeltins,' were represented by young men grotesquely habited, with false hair, and beards made of flax, and chaplets composed of sea-ware interwoven with shells and other marine productions, with which also were decorated their light-blue or greenish mantles of wadmaal, repeatedly before-mentioned. They had fish-spears and other emblems of their assumed quality, amongst which the classical taste of Claud Halero, by whom the masque was arranged, had not forgotten the conch-shells, which were stoutly and hoarsely winded from time to time by one or two of the aquatic deities, to the great annoyance of all who stood near them.

The nereids and water-nymphs who attended on this occasion displayed, as usual, a little more taste and ornament than was to be seen amongst their male attendants. Fantastic garments of green silk, and other materials of superior cost and fashion, had been contrived so as to imitate their idea of the inhabitants of the waters, and, at the same time, to show the shape and features of the fair wearers to the best advantage. The bracelets and shells which adorned the neck, arms, and ankles of the pretty mermaids were, in some cases, intermixed with real pearls; and the appearance, upon the whole, was such as might have done no discredit to the court of Amphitrite, especially when the long bright locks, blue eyes, fair complexions, and pleasing features of the maidens of Thule

were taken into consideration. We do not indeed pretend to aver that any of these seeming mermaids had so accurately imitated the real siren as commentators have supposed those attendant on Cleopatra did, who, adopting the fish's train of their original, were able, nevertheless, to make their 'bonds,' or 'ends' (said commentators cannot tell which), 'adornings.'¹ Indeed, had they not left their extremities in their natural state, it would have been impossible for the Zetland sirens to have executed the very pretty dance with which they rewarded the company for the ready admission which had been granted to them.

It was soon discovered that these masquers were no strangers, but a part of the guests, who, stealing out a little time before, had thus disguised themselves, in order to give variety to the mirth of the evening. The muse of Claud Halero, always active on such occasions, had supplied them with an appropriate song, of which we may give the following specimen. The song was alternate betwixt a nereid or mermaid and a merman or triton — the males and females on either part forming a semi-chorus, which accompanied and bore burden to the principal singer.

I

MERMAID

Fathoms deep beneath the wave,
Stringing beads of glistening pearl,
Singing the achievements brave
Of many an old Norwegian earl;
Dwelling where the tempest's raving
Falls as light upon our ear
As the sigh of lover craving
Pity from his lady dear,
Children of wild Thule, we,
From the deep caves of the sea,
As the lark springs from the lea,
Hither come, to share your glee.

II

MERMAN

From reining of the water-horse,
That bounded till the waves were foaming,
Watching the infant tempest's course,
Chasing the sea-snake in his roaming;
From winding charge-notes on the shell,
When the huge whale and sword-fish duel,
Or tolling shroudless seamen's knell,
When the winds and waves are cruel,

¹ See some admirable discussion on this passage in the *Variorum* Shakspeare.

THE PIRATE

Children of wild Thule, we
Have plough'd such furrows on the sea
As the steer draws on the lea,
And hither we come to share your glee.

III

MERMAIDS AND MERMEN

We heard you in our twilight cays,
A hundred fathom deep below,
For notes of joy can pierce the waves,
That drown each sound of war and woe.
Those who dwell beneath the sea
Love the sons of Thule well;
Thus, to aid your mirth, bring we
Dance, and song, and sounding shell.
Children of dark Thule, know,
Those who dwell by haaf and voe,
Where your daring shallops row,
Come to share the festal show.

The final chorus was borne by the whole voices, excepting those carrying the conch-shells, who had been trained to blow them in a sort of rude accompaniment, which had a good effect. The poetry, as well as the performance, of the masquers received great applause from all who pretended to be judges of such matters; but above all from Triptolemus Yellowley, who, his ear having caught the agricultural sounds of plough and furrow, and his brain being so well drenched that it could only construe the words in their most literal acceptation, declared roundly, and called Mordaunt to bear witness, that, though it was a shame to waste so much good lint as went to form the tritons' beards and periwigs, the song contained the only words of common sense which he had heard all that long day.

But Mordaunt had no time to answer the appeal, being engaged in attending with the utmost vigilance to the motions of one of the female masquers, who had given him a private signal as they entered, which induced him, though uncertain who she might prove to be, to expect some communication from her of importance. The siren who had so boldly touched his arm, and had accompanied the gesture with an expression of eye which bespoke his attention, was disguised with a good deal more care than her sister-masquers, her mantle being loose, and wide enough to conceal her shape completely, and her face hidden beneath a silk masque. He observed that she gradually detached herself from the rest of the masquers, and at length placed herself, as if for the advantage of the air, near the door of a chamber which remained open, looked earnestly at him again, and then

taking an opportunity, when the attention of the company was fixed upon the rest of her party, she left the apartment.

Mordaunt did not hesitate instantly to follow his mysterious guide, for such we may term the masquer, as she paused to let him see the direction she was about to take, and then walked swiftly towards the shore of the voe, or salt-water lake, now lying full before them, its small summer waves glistening and rippling under the influence of a broad moonlight, which, added to the strong twilight of those regions during the summer solstice, left no reason to regret the absence of the sun, the path of whose setting was still visible on the waves of the west, while the horizon on the east side was already beginning to glimmer with the lights of dawn.

Mordaunt had therefore no difficulty in keeping sight of his disguised guide, as she tripped it over height and hollow to the seaside, and, winding among the rocks, led the way to the spot where his own labours, during the time of his former intimacy at Burgh-Westra, had constructed a sheltered and solitary seat, where the daughters of Magnus were accustomed to spend, when the weather was suitable, a good deal of their time. Here, then, was to be the place of explanation; for the masquer stopped, and, after a moment's hesitation, sat down on the rustic settle. But from the lips of whom was he to receive it? Norna had first occurred to him; but her tall figure and slow, majestic step were entirely different from the size and gait of the more fairy-formed siren, who had preceded him with as light a trip as if he had been a real nereid, who, having remained too late upon the shore, was, under the dread of Amphitrite's displeasure, hastening to regain her native element. Since it was not Norna, it could be only, he thought, Brenda who thus singled him out; and when she had seated herself upon the bench, and taken the mask from her face, Brenda it accordingly proved to be. Mordaunt had certainly done nothing to make him dread her presence; and yet, such is the influence of bashfulness over the ingenuous youth of both sexes, that he experienced all the embarrassment of one who finds himself unexpectedly placed before a person who is justly offended with him. Brenda felt no less embarrassment; but as she had courted this interview, and was sensible it must be a brief one, she was compelled, in spite of herself, to begin the conversation.

'Mor'unt,' she said, with a hesitating voice; then correcting herself, she proceeded — 'You must be surprised, Mr. Mertoun, that I should have taken this uncommon freedom.'

'It was not till this morning, Brenda,' replied Mordaunt, 'that any mark of friendship or intimacy from you or from your sister could have surprised me. I am far more astonished that you should shun me without reason for so many hours than that you should now allow me an interview. In the name of Heaven, Brenda, in what have I offended you ? or why are we on these unusual terms ?'

'May it not be enough to say,' replied Brenda, looking downward, 'that it is my father's pleasure ?'

'No, it is not enough,' returned Mertoun. 'Your father cannot have so suddenly altered his whole thoughts of me, and his whole actions towards me, without acting under the influence of some strong delusion. I ask you but to explain of what nature it is ; for I will be contented to be lower in your esteem than the meanest hind in these islands, if I cannot show that his change of opinion is only grounded upon some infamous deception or some extraordinary mistake.'

'It may be so,' said Brenda — 'I hope it is so ; that I do hope it is so, my desire to see you thus in private may well prove to you. But it is difficult — in short, it is impossible for me to explain to you the cause of my father's resentment. Norna has spoken with him concerning it boldly, and I fear they parted in displeasure ; and you well know no light matter could cause that.'

'I have observed,' said Mordaunt, 'that your father is most attentive to Norna's counsel, and more complaisant to her peculiarities than to those of others ; this I have observed, though he is no willing believer in the supernatural qualities to which she lays claim.'

'They are related distantly,' answered Brenda, 'and were friends in youth ; nay, as I have heard, it was once supposed they would have been married ; but Norna's peculiarities showed themselves immediately on her father's death, and there was an end of that matter, if ever there was anything in it. But it is certain my father regards her with much interest ; and it is, I fear, a sign how deeply his prejudices respecting you must be rooted, since they have in some degree quarrelled on your account.'

'Now, bring us upon you, Brenda, that you have called them prejudices,' said Mertoun, warmly and hastily — 'a thousand blessings on you ! You were ever gentle-hearted : you could not have maintained even the show of unkindness long.'

'It was indeed but a show,' said Brenda, softening gradually

into the familiar tone in which they had conversed from infancy
'I could never think, Mordaunt — never, that is, seriously believe, that you could say aught unkind of Minna or of me.'

'And who dares to say I have?' said Mordaunt, giving way to the natural impetuosity of his disposition — 'who dares to say that I have, and ventures at the same time to hope that I will suffer his tongue to remain in safety betwixt his jaws? By St. Magnus the Martyr, I will feed the hawks with it!'

'Nay, now,' said Brenda, 'your anger only terrifies me, and will force me to leave you.'

'Leave me,' said he, 'without telling either the calumny or the name of the villanous calumniator!'

'Oh, there are more than one,' answered Brenda, 'that have possessed my father with an opinion — which I cannot repeat — I tell you — but there are more than one who say —'

'Were they hundreds, Brenda, I will do no less to — than I have said. Sacred Martyr! to accuse me of speaking unkindly of those whom I most respected and valued under Heaven. I will back to the apartment this instant, and your father shall do me right before all the world.'

'Do not go, for the love of Heaven!' said Brenda — 'do not go, as you would not render me the most unhappy wretch in existence!'

'Tell me then, at least, if I guess aright,' said Mordaunt, 'when I name this Cleveland for one of those who have slandered me?'

'No — no,' said Brenda, vehemently, 'you run from one error into another more dangerous. You say you are my friend I am willing to be yours — be still — a moment and hear what I have to say; our interview has lasted but too long already, and every additional moment brings additional danger with it.'

'Tell me, then,' said Mordaunt, much softened by the poor girl's extreme apprehension and distress, 'what it is that you require of me; and believe me, it is impossible for you to ask aught that I will not do my very uttermost to comply with.'

'Well, then, this captain,' said Brenda — 'this Cleveland —'

'I knew it, by Heaven!' said Mordaunt: 'my mind assured me that that fellow was, in one way or other, at the bottom of all this mischief and misunderstanding!'

'If you cannot be silent and patient for an instant,' replied Brenda, 'I must instantly quit you. What I meant to say had no relation to you, but to another — in one word, to my sister

Minna. I have nothing to say concerning her dislike to you, but an anxious tale to tell concerning his attention to her.'

'It is obvious, striking, and marked,' said Mordaunt; 'and, unless my eyes deceive me, it is received as welcome, if, indeed, it is not returned.'

'That is the very cause of my fear,' said Brenda. 'I, too, was struck with the external appearance, frank manners, and romantic conversation of this man.'

'His appearance!' said Mordaunt; 'he is stout and well-featured enough, to be sure; but, as old Sinclair of Quendale said to the Spanish admiral, "Farcie on his face! I have seen many a fairer hang on the Borough Moor." From his manners, he might be captain of a privateer; and, by his conversation, the trumpeter to his own puppet-show: for he speaks of little else than his own exploits.'

'You are mistaken,' answered Brenda: 'he speaks but too well on all that he has seen and learned; besides, he has really been in many distant countries and in many gallant actions, and he can tell them with as much spirit as modesty. You would think you saw the flash and heard the report of the guns. And he has other tones of talking too — about the delightful trees and fruits of distant climates; and how the people wear no dress, through the whole year, half so warm as our summer gowns, and, indeed, put on little except cambrie and muslin.'

'Upon my word, Brenda, he does seem to understand the business of amusing young ladies,' replied Mordaunt.

'He does, indeed,' said Brenda, with great simplicity. 'I assure you that, at first, I liked him better than Minna did: and yet, though she is so much cleverer than I am, I know more of the world than she does; for I have seen more of cities, having been once at Kirkwall; besides that I was thrice at Lerwick, when the Dutch ships were there, and so I should not be very easily deceived in people.'

'And pray, Brenda,' said Mertoun, 'what was it that made you think less favourably of the young fellow, who seems to be so captivating?'

'Why,' said Brenda, after a moment's reflection, 'at first he was much livelier; and the stories he told were not quite so melancholy or so terrible; and he laughed and danced more.'

'And, perhaps, at that time, danced oftener with Brenda than with her sister?' added Mordaunt.

'No — I am not sure of that,' said Brenda; 'and yet, to speak

plain, I could have no suspicion of him at all while he was attending quite equally to us both ; for you know that then he could have been no more to us than yourself, Mordaunt Mertoun, or young Swaraster, or any other young man in the islands.'

'But, why then,' said Mordaunt, 'should you not see him, with patience, become acquainted with your sister? He is wealthy, or seems to be so at least. You say he is accomplished and pleasant. What else would you desire in a lover for Minna?'

'Mordaunt, you forget who we are,' said the maiden, assuming an air of consequence, which sat as gracefully upon her simplicity as did the different tone in which she had spoken hitherto. 'This is a little world of ours, this Zetland, inferior, perhaps, in soil and climate to other parts of the earth, at least so strangers say ; but it is our own little world, and we, the daughters of Magnus Troil, hold a first rank in it. It would, I think, little become us, who are descended from sea-kings and jarls, to throw ourselves away upon a stranger, who comes to our coast, like the eider-duck in spring, from we know not whence, and may leave it in autumn, to go we know not where.'

'And who may ne'ertheless entice a Zetland golden-eye to accompany his migration,' said Mertoun.

'I will hear nothing light on such a subject,' replied Brenda, indignantly. 'Minna, like myself, is the daughter of Magnus Troil, the friend of strangers, but the father of Hialtland. He gives them the hospitality they need ; but let not the proudest of them think that they can, at their pleasure, ally with his house.'

She said this in a tone of considerable warmth, which she instantly softened, as she added, 'No, Mordaunt, do not suppose that Minna Troil is capable of so far forgetting what she owes to her father and her father's blood as to think of marrying this Cleveland ; but she may lend an ear to him so long as to destroy her future happiness. She has that sort of mind into which some feelings sink deeply. You remember how Ulla Storlson used to go, day by day, to the top of Vossdale Head, to look for her lover's ship that was never to return? When I think of her slow step, her pale cheek, her eye, that grew dimmer and dimmer, like the lamp that is half extinguished for lack of oil ; when I remember the fluttered look of something like hope with which she ascended the cliff at morning, and the deep, dead despair which sat on her forehead when she returned—when I think on all this, can you wonder that I fear for Minna, whose heart is formed to entertain, with

such deep-rooted fidelity, any affection that may be implanted in it ?

'I do not wonder,' said Mordaunt, eagerly sympathising with the poor girl ; for, besides the tremulous expression of her voice, the light could almost show him the tear which trembled in her eye, as she drew the picture to which her fancy had assimilated her sister — 'I do not wonder that you should feel and fear whatever the purest affection can dictate ; and if you can but point out to me in what I can serve your sisterly love, you shall find me as ready to venture my life, if necessary, as I have been to go out on the crag to get you the eggs of the guillemot ; and, believe me, that whatever has been told to your father or yourself of my entertaining the slightest thoughts of disrespect or unkindness is as false as a fiend could devise.'

'I believe it,' said Brenda, giving him her hand — 'I believe it, and my bosom is lighter, now I have renewed my confidence in so old a friend. How you can aid us, I know not ; but it was by the advice, I may say by the commands, of Norna that I have ventured to make this communication ; and I almost wonder,' she added, as she looked around her, 'that I have had courage to carry me through it. At present you know all that I can tell you of the risk in which my sister stands. Look after this Cleveland ; beware how you quarrel with him, since you must so surely come by the worst with an experienced soldier.'

'I do not exactly understand,' said the youth, 'how that should so surely be. This I know, that, with the good limbs and good heart that God hath given me, ay, and with a good cause to boot, I am little afraid of any quarrel which Cleveland can fix upon me.'

'Then, if not for your own sake, for Minna's sake,' said Brenda — 'for my father's — for mine — for all our sakes, avoid any strife with him ; but be contented to watch him, and, if possible, to discover who he is, and what are his intentions towards us. He has talked of going to Orkney to inquire after the consort with whom he sailed ; but day after day and week after week passes, and he goes not ; and while he keeps my father company over the bottle, and tells Minna romantic stories of foreign people, and distant wars, in wild and unknown regions, the time glides on, and the stranger, of whom we know nothing except that he is one, becomes gradually closer and more inseparably intimate in our society. And now fare

well. Norna hopes to make your peace with my father, and entreats you not to leave Burgh-Westra to-morrow, however cold he and my sister may appear towards you. 'I too,' she said, stretching her hand towards him, 'must wear a face of cold friendship as towards an unwelcomed visitor, but at heart we are still Brenda and Mordaunt. And now separate quickly, for we must not be seen together.'

She stretched her hand to him, but withdrew it in some slight confusion, laughing and blushing, when, by a natural impulse, he was about to press it to his lips. He endeavoured for a moment to detain her, for the interview had for him a degree of fascination which, as often as he had before been alone with Brenda, he had never experienced. But she extricated herself from him, and again signing an adieu, and pointing out to him a path different from that which she was herself about to take, tripped towards the house, and was soon hidden from his view by the acclivity.

Mordaunt stood gazing after her in a state of mind to which, as yet, he had been a stranger. The dubious neutral ground between love and friendship may be long and safely trodden, until he who stands upon it is suddenly called upon to recognise the authority of the one or the other power; and then it most frequently happens that the party who for years supposed himself only to be a friend finds himself at once transformed into a lover. That such a change in Mordaunt's feelings should take place from this date, although he himself was unable exactly to distinguish its nature, was to be expected. He found himself at once received, with the most unsuspecting frankness, into the confidence of a beautiful and fascinating young woman, by whom he had, so short a time before, imagined himself despised and disliked; and, if anything could make a change, in itself so surprising and so pleasing, yet more intoxicating, it was the guileless and open-hearted simplicity of Brenda, that cast an enchantment over everything which she did or said. The scene, too, might have had its effect, though there was little occasion for its aid. But a fair face looks yet fairer under the light of the moon, and a sweet voice sounds yet sweeter among the whispering sounds of a summer night. Mordaunt, therefore, who had by this time returned to the house, was disposed to listen with unusual patience and complacency to the enthusiastic declamation pronounced upon moonlight by Claud Halcro, whose ecstasies had been awakened on the subject by a short turn in the open a

undertaken to qualify the vapours of the good liquor, which he had not spared during the festival.

'The sun, my boy,' he said, 'is every wretched labourer's day-lantern : it comes glaring yonder, out of the east, to summon up a whole world to labour and to misery ; whereas the merry moon lights all of us to mirth and to love.'

'And to madness, or she is much belied,' said Mordaunt, by way of saying something.

'Let it be so,' answered Halcro, 'so she does not turn us melancholy mad. My dear young friend, the folks of this painstaking world are far too anxious about possessing all their wits, or having them, as they say, about them. At least I know I have been often called half-witted, and I am sure I have gone through the world as well as if I had double the quantity. But stop — where was I ? Oh, touching and concerning the moon ; why, man, she is the very soul of love and poetry. I question if there was ever a true lover in existence who had not got at least as far as "O thou," in a sonnet in her praise.'

'The moon,' said the factor, who was now beginning to speak very thick, 'ripens corn, at least the old folk said so ; and she fills nuts also, whilk is of less matter — *sparge nucs, pueri.*'

'A fine — a fine,' said the Udaller, who was now in his altitudes ; 'the factor speaks Greek. By the bones of my holy namesake, St. Magnus, he shall drink off the yawl full of punch, unless he gives us a song on the spot !'

'Too much water drowned the miller,' answered Triptolemus. 'My brain has more need of draining than of being drenched with more liquor.'

'Sing, then,' said the despotic landlord, 'for no one shall speak any other language here save honest Norse, jolly Dutch, or Danske, or broad Scots, at the least of it. So, Eric Scambester, produce the yawl, and fill it to the brim, as a charge for demurrage.'

Ere the vessel could reach the agriculturist, he, seeing it under way and steering towards him by short tacks (for Scambester himself was by this time not over steady in his course), made a desperate effort, and began to chant or rather to croak forth, a Yorkshire harvest-home ballad, which his father used to sing when he was a little mellow, and which went to the tune of 'Hey, Dobbin, away with the waggon.' The rueful aspect of the singer, and the desperately discordant tones of

his voice, formed so delightful a contrast with the jollity of the words and tune, that honest Triptolemus afforded the same sort of amusement which a reveller might give by appearing on a festival-day in the holyday coat of his grandfather. The jest concluded the evening, for even the mighty and strong-headed Magnus himself had confessed the influence of the sleepy god. The guests went off as they best might, each to his separate crib and resting-place, and in a short time the mansion, which was of late so noisy, was hushed into perfect silence.

CHAPTER XVII

They man their boats, and all the young men arm
With whatsoever might the monsters harm ;
Pikes, halberds, spits, and darts, that wound afar,
The tools of peace and implements of war.
Now was the time for vigorous lads to show
What love or honour could incite them to ; —
A goodly theatre, where rocks are round
With reverend age and lovely lasses crown'd.

Battle of the Summer Islands.

THE morning which succeeds such a feast as that of Magnus Troil usually lacks a little of the zest which seasoned the revels of the preceding day, as the fashionable reader may have observed at a public breakfast during the race-week in a country town ; for, in what is called the best society, these lingering moments are usually spent by the company each apart in their own dressing-rooms. At Burgh-Westra, it will readily be believed, no such space for retirement was afforded ; and the lasses, with their paler cheeks, the elder dames, with many a wink and yawn, were compelled to meet with their male companions, headaches and all, just three hours after they had parted from each other.

Eric Scambester had done all that man could do to supply the full means of diverting the *ennui* of the morning meal. The board groaned with rounds of hung beef, made after the fashion of Zetland — with pasties — with baked meats — with fish, dressed and cured in every possible manner ; nay, with the foreign delicacies of tea, coffee, and chocolate ; for, as we have already had occasion to remark, the situation of these islands made them early acquainted with various articles of foreign luxury, which were, as yet, but little known in Scotland, where, at a much later period than that we write of, one pound of green tea was dressed like cabbage, and another converted into a vegetable sauce for salt beef, by the ignorance of the good housewives to whom they had been sent as rare presents.

Besides these preparations, the table exhibited whatever mighty potions were resorted to by *bons vivans*, under the facetious name of a 'hair of the dog that bit you.' There was the potent Irish usquebaugh — right Nantz — genuine Schiedam — aquavita from Caithness — and Golden Wasser from Hamburg; there was rum of formidable antiquity, and cordials, from the Leeward Islands. After these details, it were needless to mention the stout home-brewed ale, the German mum and schwartz beer; and still more would it be beneath our dignity to dwell upon the innumerable sorts of pottage and hummery, together with the bland and various preparations of milk, for those who preferred thinner potations.

No wonder that the sight of so much good cheer awakened the appetite and raised the spirits of the fatigued revellers. The young men began immediately to seek out their partners of the preceding evening, and to renew the small talk which had driven the night so merrily away; while Magnus, with his stout old Norse kindred, encouraged, by precept and example, those of elder days and graver mood to a substantial flirtation with the good things before them. Still, however, there was a long period to be filled up before dinner; for the most protracted breakfast cannot well last above an hour; and it was to be feared that Claud Halcro meditated the occupation of this vacant morning with a formidable recitation of his own verses, besides telling, at its full length, the whole history of his introduction to glorious John Dryden. But fortune relieved the guests of Burgh-Westra from this threatened infliction, by sending them means of amusement peculiarly suited to their taste and habits.

Most of the guests were using their toothpicks, some were beginning to talk of what was to be done next, when with haste in his step, fire in his eye, and a harpoon in his hand, Eric Scambester came to announce to the company that there was a whale on shore, or nearly so, at the throat of the voe! Then you might have seen such a joyous, boisterous, and universal bustle as only the love of sport, so deeply implanted in our nature, can possibly inspire. A set of country squires, about to beat for the first woodcocks of the season, were a comparison as petty in respect to the glee as in regard to the importance of the object. The battue upon a strong cover in Ettrick Forest, for the destruction of the foxes; the insurrection of the sportsmen of the Lennox, when one of the duke's deer gets out from Inch-Mirran; nay, the joyous rally of the fox-chase itself,

with all its blithe accompaniments of hound and horn, fall infinitely short of the animation with which the gallant sons of Thule set off to encounter the monster whom the sea had sent for their amusement at so opportune a conjuncture.

The multifarious stores of Burgh-Westra were rummaged hastily for all sorts of arms which could be used on such an occasion. Harpoons, swords, pikes, and halberds fell to the lot of some; others contented themselves with hay-forks, spits, and whatever else could be found, that was at once long and sharp. Thus hastily equipped, one division, under the command of Captain Cleveland, hastened to man the boats which lay in the little haven, while the rest of the party hurried by land to the scene of action.

Poor Triptolemus was interrupted in a plan which he, too, had formed against the patience of the Zetlanders, and which was to have consisted in a lecture upon the agriculture and the capabilities of the country, by this sudden hubbub, which put an end at once to Halcro's poetry and to his no less formidable prose. It may be easily imagined that he took very little interest in the sport which was so suddenly substituted for his lucubrations, and he would not even have deigned to have looked upon the active scene which was about to take place, had he not been stimulated thereunto by the exhortations of Mistress Baby. 'Pit yoursell forward, man,' said that provident person — 'pit yoursell forward; wha kens whare a blessing may light? They say that a' men share and share equals-aquals in the creature's ulzie, and a pint o't wad be worth siller, to light the cruise in the lang dark nights that they speak of. Pit yoursell forward, man — there's a graip to ye — faint heart never wan fair lady; wha kens but what, when it's fresh, it may eat weel enough, and spare butter?'

What zeal was added to Triptolemus's motions by the prospect of eating fresh train-oil instead of butter, we know not; but, as better might not be, he brandished the rural implement (a stable-fork) with which he was armed, and went down to wage battle with the whale.

The situation in which the enemy's ill fate had placed him was particularly favourable to the enterprise of the islanders. A tide of unusual height had carried the animal over a large bar of sand, into the voe or creek in which he was now lying. So soon as he found the water ebbing, he became sensible of his danger, and had made desperate efforts to get over the shallow water, where the waves broke on the bar; but hitherto

he had rather injured than mended his condition, having got himself partly aground, and lying therefore particularly exposed to the meditated attack. At this moment the enemy came down upon him. The front ranks consisted of the young and hardy, armed in the miscellaneous manner we have described; while, to witness and animate their efforts, the young women, and the elderly persons of both sexes, took their place among the rocks which overhung the scene of action.

As the boats had to double a little headland ere they opened the mouth of the voe, those who came by land to the shores of the inlet had time to make the necessary reconnoissances upon the force and situation of the enemy, on whom they were about to commence a simultaneous attack by land and sea.

This duty the stout-hearted and experienced general, for so the Udaller might be termed, would entrust to no eyes but his own; and, indeed, his external appearance and his sage conduct rendered him alike qualified for the command which he enjoyed. His gold-laced hat was exchanged for a bearskin cap, his suit of blue broadcloth, with its scarlet lining, and loops, and frogs of bullion, had given place to a red flannel jacket, with buttons of black horn, over which he wore a seal-skin shirt curiously seamed and plaited on the bosom, such as are used by the Esquimaux, and sometimes by the Greenland whale-fishers. Sea-boots of a formidable size completed his dress, and in his hand he held a large whaling-knife, which he brandished, as if impatient to employ it in the operation of 'flinching' the huge animal which lay before them — that is, the act of separating its flesh from its bones. Upon closer examination, however, he was obliged to confess that the sport to which he had conducted his friends, however much it corresponded with the magnificent scale of his hospitality, was likely to be attended with its own peculiar dangers and difficulties.

The animal, upwards of sixty feet in length, was lying perfectly still, in a deep part of the voe into which it had weltered, and where it seemed to await the return of tide, of which it was probably assured by instinct. A council of experienced harpooners was instantly called, and it was agreed that an effort should be made to noose the tail of this torpid leviathan, by casting a cable around it, to be made fast by anchors to the shore, and thus to secure against his escape, in case the tide should make before they were able to despatch him. Three boats were destined to this delicate piece of service, one of which the Udaller himself proposed to command, while Cleve-

land and Mertoun were to direct the two others. This being decided, they sat down on the strand, waiting with impatience until the naval part of the force should arrive in the *voe*. It was during this interval that Triptolemus Yellowley, after measuring with his eyes the extraordinary size of the whale, observed that, in his poor mind, 'A wain with six oxen, or with sixty oxen either, if they were the oxen of the country, could not drag siccan a huge creature from the water, where it was now lying, to the sea-beach.'

Trifling as this remark may seem to the reader, it was connected with a subject which always fired the blood of the old Udaller, who, glancing upon Triptolemus a quick and stern look, asked him what the devil it signified, supposing a hundred oxen could not drag the whale upon the beach? Mr. Yellowley, though not much liking the tone with which the question was put, felt that his dignity and his profit compelled him to answer as follows: 'Nay, sir, you know yourself, Master Magnus Troil, and every one knows that knows anything, that whales of siccan size as may not be masterfully dragged on shore by the instrumentality of one wain with six oxen are the right and property of the admiral, who is at this time the same noble lord who is, moreover, chamberlain of these isles.'

'And I tell you, Mr. Triptolemus Yellowley,' said the Udaller, 'as I would tell your master if he were here, that every man who risks his life to bring that fish ashore shall have an equal share and partition, according to our ancient and loveable Norse custom and wont; nay, if there is so much as a woman looking on, that will but touch the cable, she will be partner with us; ay, and more than all that, if she will but say there is a reason for it, we will assign a portion to the babe that is unborn.'

The strict principle of equity which dictated this last arrangement occasioned laughter among the men, and some slight confusion among the women. The factor, however, thought it shame to be so easily daunted. '*Suum cuique tribuito*,' said he: 'I will stand for my lord's right and my own.'

'Will you?' replied Magnus; 'then, by the Martyr's bones, you shall have no law of partition but that of God and St. Olave, which we had before either factor, or treasurer, or chamberlain was heard of! All shall share that lend a hand, and never a one else. So you, Master Factor, shall be busy as well as other folk, and think yourself lucky to share like other folk. Jump into that boat (for the boats had by this time

pulled round the headland), and you, my lads, make way for the factor in the stern sheets: he shall be the first man this blessed day that shall strike the fish.'

The loud, authoritative voice, and the habit of absolute command inferred in the Udaller's whole manner, together with the conscious want of favourers and backers amongst the rest of the company, rendered it difficult for Triptolemus to evade compliance, although he was thus about to be placed in a situation equally novel and perilous. He was still, however, hesitating, and attempting an explanation, with a voice in which anger was qualified by fear, and both thinly disguised under an attempt to be jocular, and to represent the whole as a jest, when he heard the voice of Baby maundering in his ear, 'Wad he lose his share of the ulzie, and the lang Zetland winter coming on, when the lightest day in December is not so clear as a moonless night in the Mearns?'

This domestic instigation, in addition to those of fear of the Udaller and shame to seem less courageous than others, so inflamed the agriculturist's spirits that he shook his 'graip' aloft, and entered the boat with the air of Neptune himself, carrying on high his trident.

The three boats destined for this perilous service now approached the dark mass, which lay like an islet in the deepest part of the voe, and suffered them to approach without showing any sign of animation. Silently, and with such precaution as the extreme delicacy of the operation required, the intrepid adventurers, after the failure of their first attempt, and the expenditure of considerable time, succeeded in casting a cable around the body of the torpid monster, and in carrying the ends of it ashore, when an hundred hands were instantly employed in securing them. But, ere this was accomplished, the tide began to make fast, and the Udaller informed his assistants that either the fish must be killed, or at least greatly wounded, ere the depth of water on the bar was sufficient to float him, or that he was not unlikely to escape from their joint prowess.

'Wherefore,' said he, 'we must set to work, and the factor shall have the honour to make the first throw.'

The valiant Triptolemus caught the word; and it is necessary to say that the patience of the whale, in suffering himself to be noosed without resistance, had abated his terrors, and very much lowered the creature in his opinion. He protested the fish had no more wit, and scarcely more activity, than a black snail; and, influenced by this undue contempt of the adversary, he

waited neither for a further signal, nor a better weapon, nor a more suitable position, but, rising in his energy, hurled his grapple with all his force against the unfortunate monster. The boats had not yet retreated from him to the distance necessary to ensure safety when this injudicious commencement of the war took place.

Magnus Troil, who had only jested with the factor, and had reserved the launching the first spear against the whale to some much more skilful hand, had just time to exclaim, 'Mind yourselves, lads, or we are all swamped !' when the monster, roused at once from inactivity by the blow of the factor's missile, blew, with a noise resembling the explosion of a steam-engine, a huge shower of water into the air, and at the same time began to lash the waves with his tail in every direction. The boat in which Magnus presided received the shower of brine which the animal spouted aloft ; and the adventurous Triptolemus, who had a full share of the immersion, was so much astonished and terrified by the consequences of his own valorous deed that he tumbled backwards amongst the feet of the people, who, too busy to attend to him, were actively engaged in getting the boat into shoal water, out of the whale's reach. Here he lay for some minutes, trampled on by the feet of the boatmen, until they lay on their oars to bale, when the Udaller ordered them to pull to shore and land this spare hand, who had commenced the fishing so inauspiciously.

While this was doing, the other boats had also pulled off to safer distance, and now, from these as well as from the shore, the unfortunate native of the deep was overwhelmed by all kinds of missiles : harpoons and spears flew against him on all sides, guns were fired, and each various means of annoyance plied which could excite him to exhaust his strength in useless rage. When the animal found that he was locked in by shallows on all sides, and became sensible, at the same time, of the strain of the cable on his body, the convulsive efforts which he made to escape, accompanied with sounds resembling deep and loud groans, would have moved the compassion of all but a practised whale-fisher. The repeated showers which he spouted into the air began now to be mingled with blood, and the waves which surrounded him assumed the same crimson appearance. Meantime, the attempts of the assailants were redoubled ; but Mordaunt Mertoun and Cleveland, in particular, exerted themselves to the uttermost, contending who should display most courage in approaching the monster, so tremendous in its agonies, and

should inflict the most deep and deadly wounds upon its huge bulk.

The contest seemed at last pretty well over ; for, although the animal continued from time to time to make frantic exertions for liberty, yet its strength appeared so much exhausted, that, even with the assistance of the tide, which had now risen considerably, it was thought it could scarcely extricate itself.

Magnus gave the signal to venture nearer to the whale, calling out at the same time, 'Close in, lads, he is not half so mad now. The factor may look for a winter's oil for the two lamps at Harfra. Pull close in, lads.'

Ere his orders could be obeyed, the other two boats had anticipated his purpose ; and Mordaunt Mertoun, eager to distinguish himself above Cleveland, had, with the whole strength he possessed, plunged a half-pike into the body of the animal. But the leviathan, like a nation whose resources appear totally exhausted by previous losses and calamities, collected his whole remaining force for an effort which proved at once desperate and successful. The wound last received had probably reached through his external defences of blubber, and attained some very sensitive part of the system ; for he roared aloud, as he sent to the sky a mingled sheet of brine and blood, and snapping the strong cable like a twig, overset Mertoun's boat with a blow of his tail, shot himself, by a mighty effort, over the bar, upon which the tide had now risen considerably, and made out to sea, carrying with him a whole grove of the implements which had been planted in his body, and leaving behind him, on the waters, a dark red trace of his course.

'There goes to sea your cruise of oil, Master Yellowley,' said Magnus, 'and you must consume mutton tuet or go to bed in the dark.'

'*Operam et oleum perdidi,*' muttered Triptolemus ; 'but if they catch me whale-fishing again, I will consent that the fish shall swallow me as he did Jonah.'

'But where is Mordaunt Mertoun all this while?' exclaimed Claud Halero ; and it was instantly perceived that the youth, who had been stunned when his boat was stove, was unable to swim to shore as the other sailors did, and now floated senseless upon the waves.

We have noticed the strange and inhuman prejudice which rendered the Zetlanders of that period unwilling to assist those whom they saw in the act of drowning, though that is the calamity to which the islanders are most frequently exposed. Three

men, however, soared above this superstition. The first was Claud Halero, who threw himself from a small rock headlong into the waves, forgetting, as he himself afterwards stated, that he could not swim, and, if possessed of the harp of Arion, had no dolphins in attendance. The first plunge which the poet made in deep water reminding him of these deficiencies, he was fain to cling to the rock from which he had dived, and was at length glad to regain the shore, at the expense of a ducking.

Magnus Troil, whose honest heart forgot his late coolness towards Mordaunt when he saw the youth's danger, would instantly have brought him more effectual assistance, but Eric Scambester held him fast.

'Hout, sir — hout,' exclaimed that faithful attendant, 'Captain Cleveland has a grip of Mr. Mordaunt; just let the two strangers help ilk other, and stand by the upshot. The light of the country is not to be quenched for the like of them. Bide still, sir, I say. Bredness Voe is not a bowl of punch, that a man can be fished out of like a toast with a long spoon.'

This sage remonstrance would have been altogether lost upon Magnus had he not observed that Cleveland had, in fact, jumped out of the boat and swam to Mertoun's assistance, and was keeping him afloat till the boat came to the aid of both. As soon as the immediate danger which called so loudly for assistance was thus ended, the honest Udaller's desire to render aid terminated also; and recollecting the cause of offence which he had, or thought he had, against Mordaunt Mertoun, he shook off his butler's hold, and, turning round scornfully from the beach, called Eric an old fool for supposing that he cared whether the young fellow sank or swam.

Still, however, amid his assumed indifference, Magnus could not help peeping over the heads of the circle which, surrounding Mordaunt as soon as he was brought on shore, were charitably employed in endeavouring to recall him to life; and he was not able to attain the appearance of absolute unconcern until the young man sat up on the beach and showed plainly that the accident had been attended with no material consequences. It was then first that, cursing the assistants for not giving the lad a glass of brandy, he walked sullenly away, as if totally unconcerned in his fate.

The women, always accurate in observing the tell-tale emotions of each other, failed not to remark that, when the sisters of Burgh-Westra saw Mordaunt immersed in the waves, Minna grew as pale as death, while Brenda uttered successive shrieks

of terror. But, though there were some nods, winks, and hints that auld acquaintance were not easily forgot, it was, on the whole, candidly admitted that less than such marks of interest could scarce have been expected when they saw the companion of their early youth in the act of perishing before their eyes.

Whatever interest Mordaunt's condition excited while it seemed perilous, began to abate as he recovered himself; and when his senses were fully restored, only Claud Halero, with two or three others, were standing by him. About ten paces off stood Cleveland — his hair and clothes dropping water, and his features wearing so peculiar an expression as immediately to arrest the attention of Mordaunt. There was a suppressed smile on his cheek, and a look of pride in his eye, that implied liberation from a painful restraint, and something resembling gratified scorn. Claud Halero hastened to intimate to Mordaunt that he owed his life to Cleveland; and the youth, rising from the ground, and losing all other feelings in those of gratitude, stepped forward with his hand stretched out, to offer his warmest thanks to his preserver. But he stopped short in surprise, as Cleveland, retreating a pace or two, folded his arms on his breast and declined to accept his proffered hand. He drew back in turn, and gazed with astonishment at the ungracious manner, and almost insulting look, with which Cleveland, who had formerly rather expressed a frank cordiality, or at least openness of bearing, now, after having thus rendered him a most important service, chose to receive his thanks.

'It is enough,' said Cleveland, observing his surprise, 'and it is unnecessary to say more about it. I have paid back my debt, and we are now equal.'

'You are more than equal with me, Captain Cleveland,' answered Mertoun, 'because you endangered your life to do for me what I did for you without the slightest risk; besides,' he added, trying to give the discourse a more pleasant turn, 'I have your rifle-gun to boot.'

'Cowards only count danger for any point of the game,' said Cleveland. 'Danger has been my consort for life, and sailed with me on a thousand worse voyages; and for rifles, I have enough of my own, and you may see, when you will, which can use them best.'

There was something in the tone with which this was said that struck Mordaunt strongly: it was 'miching malicho,' as Hamlet says, 'and meant mischief.' Cleveland saw his surprise, came close up to him, and spoke in a low tone of voice: 'Hark

ye, my young brother. There is a custom amongst us gentlemen of fortune, that, when we follow the same chase, and take the wind out of each other's sails, we think sixty yards of the sea-beach and a brace of rifles are no bad way of making our odds even.'

'I do not understand you, Captain Cleveland,' said Mordaunt.

'I do not suppose you do — I did not suppose you would,' said the captain; and, turning on his heel, with a smile that resembled a sneer, Mordaunt saw him mingle with the guests, and very soon beheld him at the side of Minna, who was talking to him with animated features, that seemed to thank him for his gallant and generous conduct.

'If it were not for Brenda,' thought Mordaunt, 'I almost wish he had left me in the voe, for no one seems to care whether I am alive or dead. Two rifles and sixty yards of sea-beach — is that what he points at? It may come; but not on the day he has saved my life with risk of his own.'

While he was thus musing, Eric Scambester was whispering to Halcro, 'If these two lads do not do each other a mischief, there is no faith in freits. Master Mordaunt saves Cleveland — well. Cleveland, in requital, has turned all the sunshine of Burgh-Westra to his own side of the house; and think what it is to lose favour in such a house as this, where the punch-kettle is never allowed to cool! Well, now that Cleveland in his turn has been such a fool as to fish Mordaunt out of the voe, see if he does not give him sour sillocks for stock-fish.'

'Pshaw — pshaw!' replied the poet, 'that is all old women's fancies, my friend Eric; for what says glorious Dryden — sainted John —

The yellow gall that in your bosom floats
Engenders all these melancholy thoughts.'

'St. John, or St. James either, may be mistaken in the matter,' said Eric; 'for I think neither of them lived in Zetland. I only say that, if there is faith in old saws, these two lads will do each other a mischief; and if they do, I trust it will light on Mordaunt Mertoun.'

'And why, Eric Scambester,' said Halcro, hastily and angrily, 'should you wish ill to that poor young man, that is worth fifty of the other?'

'Let every one roose the ford as he finds it,' replied Eric. 'Master Mordaunt is all for wan water, like his old dog-fish of

a father ; now Captain Cleveland, d' ye see, takes his glass, like an honest fellow and a gentleman.'

'Rightly reasoned, and in thine own division,' said Halero ; and, breaking off their conversation, took his way back to Burgh-Westra, to which the guests of Magnus were now returning, discussing as they went, with much animation, the various incidents of their attack upon the whale, and not a little scandalised that it should have baffled all their exertions.

'I hope Captain Donderdrecht of the "Eintracht" of Rotterdam will never hear of it,' said Magnus ; 'he would swear, donner and blitzen, we were only fit to fish flounders.'¹

¹ The contest about the whale will remind the poetical reader of Waller's *Battle of the Summer Islands*.

CHAPTER XVIII

And helter-skelter have I rode to thee,
And tidings do I bring, and lucky joys,
And golden times, and happy news of price.

Ancient Pistol.

FORTUNE, who seems at times to bear a conscience, owed the hospitable Udaller some amends, and accordingly repaid to Burgh-Westra the disappointment occasioned by the unsuccessful whale-fishing by sending thither, on the evening of the day in which that incident happened, no less a person than the jagger, or travelling merchant, as he styled himself, Bryce Snailsfoot, who arrived in great pomp, himself on one pony, and his pack of goods, swelled to nearly double its usual size, forming the burden of another, which was led by a bare-headed, bare-legged boy.

As Bryce announced himself the bearer of important news, he was introduced to the dining-apartment, where (for that primitive age was no respecter of persons) he was permitted to sit down at a side-table, and amply supplied with provisions and good liquor; while the attentive hospitality of Magnus permitted no questions to be put to him, until, his hunger and thirst appeased, he announced, with the sense of importance attached to distant travels, that he had just yesterday arrived at Lerwick from Kirkwall, the capital of Orkney, and would have been here yesterday, but it blew hard off the Fitful Head.

'We had no wind here,' said Magnus.

'There is somebody has not been sleeping, then,' said the pedlar, 'and her name begins with N; but Heaven is above all.'

'But the news from Orkney, Bryce, instead of croaking about a capful of wind?'

'Such news,' replied Bryce, 'as has not been heard this thirty years — not since Cromwell's time.'

'There is not another Revolution, is there?' said Halcro;

'King James has not come back, as blithe as King Charlie did, has he?'

'It's news,' replied the pedlar, 'that are worth twenty kings, and kingdoms to boot of them; for what good did the revolutions ever do us? and I daresay we have seen a dozen, great and sma'.'

'Are any Indiamen come north about?' said Magnus Troil.

'Ye are nearer the mark, fowd,' said the jagger; 'but it is nae Indiaman, but a gallant armed vessel, chokefu' of merchandise, that they part with so easy that a decent man like mysell can afford to give the country the best pennyworths you ever saw; and that you will say when I open that pack, for I count to carry it back another sort lighter than when I brought it here.'

'Ay — ay, Bryce,' said the U'daller, 'you must have had good bargains if you sell cheap; but what ship was it?'

'Cannot justly say. I spoke to nobody but the captain, who was a discreet man; but she had been down on the Spanish Main, for she has silks and satins, and tobacco, I warrant you, and wine, and no lack of sugar, and bonnie-wallies baith of silver and gowd, and a bonny dredging of gold dust into the bargain.'

'What like was she?' said Cleveland, who seemed to give much attention.

'A stout ship,' said the itinerant merchant, 'schooner-rigged, sails like a dolphin, they say, carries twelve guns, and is pierced for twenty.'

'Did you hear the captain's name?' said Cleveland, speaking rather lower than his usual tone.

'I just ca'd him the captain,' replied Bryce Snailsfoot; 'for I make it a rule never to ask questions of them I deal with in the way of trade; for there is many an honest captain, begging your pardon, Captain Cleveland, that does not care to have his name tacked to his title; and as lang as we ken what bargains we are making, what signifies it wha we are making them wi', ye ken?'

'Bryce Snailsfoot is a cautious man,' said the U'daller, laughing: 'he knows a fool may ask more questions than a wise man cares to answer.'

'I have dealt with the fair traders in my day,' replied Snailsfoot, 'and I ken nae use in blurting braid out with a man's name at every moment; but I will uphold this gentleman to be a gallant commander — ay, and a kind one too; for

every one of his crew is as brave in apparel as himself nearly: the very foremast-men have their silken scarfs — I have seen many a lady wear a warse, and think hersell nae sma' drink — and for siller buttons, and buckles, and the lave of sic vanities, there is nae end of them.'

'Idiots!' muttered Cleveland between his teeth; and then added, 'I suppose they are often ashore, to show all their bravery to the lasses of Kirkwall?'

'Ne'er a bit of that are they. The captain will scarce let them stir ashore without the boatswain go in the boat as rough a tarpaulin as ever swabb'd a deck, and you may as weel catch a cat without her claws as him without his cutlass and his double brace of pistols about him; every man stands as much in awe of him as of the commander himsell.'

'That must be Hawkins, or the devil,' said Cleveland.

'Aweel, captain,' replied the jagger, 'be he the tane or the tither, or a wee bit o' baith, mind it is you that gave him these names, and not me.'

'Why, Captain Cleveland,' said the Udaller, 'this may prove the very consort you spoke of.'

'They must have had some good luck, then,' said Cleveland, 'to put them in better plight than when I left them. Did they speak of having lost their consort, pedlar?'

'In troth did they,' said Bryce; 'that is, they said something about a partner that had gone down to Davie Jones in these seas.'

'And did you tell them what you knew of her?' said the Udaller.

'And wha the deevil wad hae been the fule, then,' said the pedlar, 'that I suld say sae? When they kend what came of the ship, the next question wad have been about the cargo; and ye wad not have had me bring down an armed vessel on the coast to harrie the poor folk about a wheen rags of duds that the sea flung upon their shores?'

'Besides what might have been found in your own pack, you scoundrel!' said Magnus Troil — an observation which produced a loud laugh. The Udaller could not help joining in the hilarity which applauded his jest; but, instantly composing his countenance, he said, in an unusually grave tone, 'You may laugh, my friends; but this is a matter which brings both a curse and a shame on the country; and till we learn to regard the rights of them that suffer by the winds and waves, we shall deserve to be oppressed and hag-ridden, as we

have been and are, by the superior strength of the strangers who rule us.'

The company hung their heads at the rebuke of Magnus Troil. Perhaps some, even of the better class, might be conscience-struck on their own account; and all of them were sensible that the appetite for plunder, on the part of the tenants and inferiors, was not at all times restrained with sufficient strictness. But Cleveland made answer gaily, 'If these honest fellows be my comrades, I will answer for them that they will never trouble the country about a parcel of chests, hammocks, and such trumpery that the Roost may have washed ashore out of my poor sloop. What signifies to them whether the trash went to Bryce Snailsfoot, or to the bottom, or to the devil? So unbuckle thy pack, Bryce, and show the ladies thy cargo, and perhaps we may see something that will please them.'

'It cannot be his consort,' said Brenda, in a whisper to her sister; 'he would have shown more joy at her appearance.'

'It must be the vessel,' answered Minna; 'I saw his eye glisten at the thought of being again united to the partner of his dangers.'

'Perhaps it glistened,' said his sister, still apart, 'at the thought of leaving Zetland; it is difficult to guess the thought of the heart from the glance of the eye.'

'Judge not, at least, unkindly of a friend's thought,' said Minna; 'and then, Brenda, if you are mistaken, the fault rests not with you.'

During this dialogue, Bryce Snailsfoot was busied in uncoiling the carefully-arranged cordage of his pack, which amounted to six good yards of dressed seal-skin, curiously complicated and secured by all manner of knots and buckles. He was considerably interrupted in the task by the Udaller and others, who pressed him with questions respecting the stranger vessel.

'Were the officers often ashore? and how were they received by the people of Kirkwall?' said Magnus Troil.

'Excellently well,' answered Bryce Snailsfoot; 'and the captain and one or two of his men had been at some of the vanities and dances which went forward in the town; but there had been some word about customs, or king's duties, or the like, and some of the higher folk, that took upon them as magistrates, or the like, had had words with the captain, and he refused to satisfy them; and then it is like he was more coldly looked on, and he spoke of carrying the ship round to

Stromness, or the Langhope, for she lay under the guns of the battery at Kirkwall. But he (Bryce) thought she wad bide at Kirkwall till the summer fair was over, for all that.'

'The Orkney gentry,' said Magnus Troil, 'are always in a hurry to draw the Scotch collar tighter round their own necks. Is it not enough that we must pay "scat" and "wattle," which were all the public dues under our old Norse government; but must they come over us with king's dues and customs besides? It is the part of an honest man to resist these things. I have done so all my life, and will do so to the end of it.'

There was a loud jubilee and shout of applause among the guests, who were (some of them at least) better pleased with Magnus Troil's latitudinarian principles with respect to the public revenue (which were extremely natural to those living in so secluded a situation, and subjected to many additional exactions) than they had been with the rigour of his judgment on the subject of wrecked goods. But Minna's inexperienced feelings carried her farther than her father, while she whispered to Brenda, not unheard by Cleveland, that the tame spirit of the Orcadians had missed every chance which late incidents had given them to emancipate these islands from the Scottish yoke.

'Why,' she said, 'should we not, under so many changes as late times have introduced, have seized the opportunity to shake off an allegiance which is not justly due from us, and to return to the protection of Denmark, our parent country? Why should we yet hesitate to do this, but that the gentry of Orkney have mixed families and friendship so much with our invaders that they have become dead to the throb of the heroic Norse blood which they derived from their ancestors?'

The latter part of this patriotic speech happened to reach the astonished ears of our friend Triptolemus, who, having a sincere devotion for the Protestant succession, and the Revolution as established, was surprised into the ejaculation, 'As the old cock crows the young cock learns—hen, I should say, mistress, and I crave your pardon if I say anything amiss in either gender. But it is a happy country where the father declares against the king's customs, and the daughter against the king's crown! and, in my judgment, it can end in naething but trees and tows.'

'Trees are scarce among us,' said Magnus; 'and for ropes, we need them for our rigging, and cannot spare them to be shirt-collars.'

'And whoever,' said the captain, 'takes umbrage at what this young lady says had better keep his ears and tongue for a safer employment than such an adventure.'

'Ay — ay,' said Triptolemus, 'it helps the matter much to speak truths which are as unwelcome to a proud stomach as wet clover to a cow's, in a land where lads are ready to draw the whittle if a lassie but looks awry. But what manners are to be expected in a country where folk call a plough-sock a markal?'

'Hark ye, Master Yellowley,' said the captain, smiling, 'I hope my manners are not among those abuses which you come hither to reform; any experiment on them may be dangerous.'

'As well as difficult,' said Triptolemus, drily; 'but fear nothing, Captain Cleveland, from my remonstrances. My labours regard the men and things of the earth, and not the men and things of the sea: you are not of my element.'

'Let us be friends, then, old clod-compeller,' said the captain.

'Clod-compeller!' said the agriculturist, bethinking himself of the lore of his earlier days. 'Clod-compeller *pro* cloud-compeller, *νεφέληγερῆτα* Ζεὺς — *Græcum est*; in which voyage came you by that phrase?'

'I have travelled books as well as seas in my day,' said the captain; 'but my last voyages have been of a sort to make me forget my early cruises through classic knowledge. But come here, Bryce; hast cast off the lashing? Come all hands, and let us see if he has aught in his cargo that is worth looking upon.'

With a proud, and at the same time a wily, smile did the crafty pedlar display a collection of wares far superior to those which usually filled his packages, and, in particular, some stuffs and embroideries of such beauty and curiosity, fringed, flowered, and worked, with such art and magnificence, upon foreign and arabesque patterns, that the sight might have dazzled a far more brilliant company than the simple race of Thule. All beheld and admired, while Mistress Baby Yellowley, holding up her hands, protested it was a sin even to look upon such extravagance, and worse than murder so much as to ask the price of them.

Others, however, were more courageous; and the prices demanded by the merchant, if they were not, as he himself declared, something just more than nothing, short only of an absolute free gift of his wares, were nevertheless so moderate as to show that he himself must have made an easy acquisition

of the goods, judging by the rate at which he offered to part with them. Accordingly, the cheapness of the articles created a rapid sale; for in Zetland, as well as elsewhere, wise folk buy more from the prudential desire to secure a good bargain than from any real occasion for the purchase. The Lady Glowrowrum bought seven petticoats and twelve stomachers on this sole principle, and other matrons present rivalled her in this sagacious species of economy. The Udaller was also a considerable purchaser; but the principal customer for whatever could please the eye of beauty was the gallant Captain Cleveland, who rummaged the jagger's stores in selecting presents for the ladies of the party, in which Minna and Brenda Troil were especially remembered.

'I fear,' said Magnus Troil, 'that the young women are to consider these pretty presents as keepsakes, and that all this liberality is only a sure sign we are soon to lose you?'

This question seemed to embarrass him to whom it was put.

'I scarce know,' he said with some hesitation, 'whether this vessel is my consort or no; I must take a trip to Kirkwall to make sure of that matter, and then I hope to return to Dunrossness to bid you all farewell.'

'In that case,' said the Udaller, after a moment's pause, 'I think I may carry you thither. I should be at the Kirkwall fair, to settle with the merchants I have consigned my fish to, and I have often promised Minna and Brenda that they should see the fair. Perhaps also your consort, or these strangers, whoever they be, may have some merchandise that will suit me. I love to see my rigging-loft well stocked with goods, almost as much as to see it full of dancers. We will go to Orkney in my own brig, and I can offer you a hammock, if you will.'

The offer seemed so acceptable to Cleveland that, after pouring himself forth in thanks, he seemed determined to mark his joy by exhausting Bryce Snailsfoot's treasures in liberality to the company. The contents of a purse of gold were transferred to the jagger, with a facility and indifference on the part of its former owner which argued either the greatest profusion or consciousness of superior and inexhaustible wealth; so that Baby whispered to her brother that, 'If he could afford to fling away money at this rate, the lad had made a better voyage in a broken ship than all the skippers of Dundee had made in their hail anes for a twelvemonth past.'

But the angry feeling in which she made this remark was much mollified when Cleveland, whose object it seemed that

evening to be to buy golden opinions of all sorts of men, approached her with a garment somewhat resembling in shape the Scottish plaid, but woven of a sort of wool so soft that it felt to the touch as if it were composed of eider-down. 'This,' he said, 'was a part of a Spanish lady's dress, called a *mantilla*; as it would exactly fit the size of Mrs. Baby Yellowley, and was very well suited for the fogs of the climate of Zetland, he entreated her to wear it for his sake.' The lady, with as much condescending sweetness as her countenance was able to express, not only consented to receive this mark of gallantry, but permitted the donor to arrange the mantilla upon her projecting and bony shoulder-blades, where, said Claud Halero, 'It hung, for all the world, as if it had been stretched betwixt a couple of cloak-pins.'

While the captain was performing this piece of courtesy, much to the entertainment of the company, which, it may be presumed, was his principal object from the beginning, Mordaunt Mertoun made purchase of a small golden chaplet, with the private intention of presenting it to Brenda, when he should find an opportunity. The price was fixed, and the article laid aside. Claud Halero also showed some desire of possessing a silver box of antique shape, for depositing tobacco, which he was in the habit of using in considerable quantity. But the bard seldom had current coin in promptitude, and, indeed, in his wandering way of life, had little occasion for any; and Bryce, on the other hand, his having been hitherto a ready-money trade, protested that his very moderate profits upon such rare and choice articles would not allow of his affording credit to the purchaser. Mordaunt gathered the import of this conversation from the mode in which they whispered together, while the bard seemed to advance a wishful finger towards the box in question, and the cautious pedlar detained it with the weight of his whole hand, as if he had been afraid it would literally make itself wings and fly into Claud Halero's pocket. Mordaunt Mertoun at this moment, desirous to gratify an old acquaintance, laid the price of the box on the table, and said he would not permit Master Halero to purchase that box, as he had settled in his own mind to make him a present of it.

'I cannot think of robbing you, my dear young friend,' said the poet; 'but the truth is, that that same box does remind me strangely of glorious John's, out of which I had the honour to take a pinch at the Wits' Coffee-house, for which I think more highly of my right-hand finger and thumb than any other

part of my body ; only you must allow me to pay you back the price when my Urkaster stock-fish come to market.'

'Settle that as you like betwixt you,' said the jagger, taking up Mordaunt's money ; 'the box is bought and sold.'

'And how dare you sell over again,' said Captain Cleveland, suddenly interfering, 'what you already have sold to me !'

All were surprised at this interjection, which was hastily made, as Cleveland, having turned from Mistress Baby, had become suddenly, and, as it seemed, not without emotion, aware what articles Bryce Snailsfoot was now disposing of. To this short and fierce question the jagger, afraid to contradict a customer of his description, answered only by stammering, that the 'Lord knew he meant nae offence.'

'How, sir ! no offence !' said the seaman, 'and dispose of my property ?' extending his hand at the same time to the box and chaplet ; 'restore the young gentleman's money, and learn to keep your course on the meridian of honesty.'

The jagger, confused and reluctant, pulled out his leathern pouch to repay to Mordaunt the money he had just deposited in it ; but the youth was not to be so satisfied.

'The articles,' he said, 'were bought and sold — these were your own words, Bryce Snailsfoot, in Master Halero's hearing, and I will suffer neither you nor any other to deprive me of my property.'

'Your property, young man ?' said Cleveland. 'It is mine : I spoke to Bryce respecting them an instant before I turned from the table.'

'I — I — I had not just heard distinctly,' said Bryce, evidently unwilling to offend either party.

'Come — come,' said the Udaller, 'we will have no quarrelling about baubles ; we shall be summoned presently to the rigging-loft' — so he used to call the apartment used as a ball-room — 'and we must all go in good-humour. The things shall remain with Bryce for to-night, and to-morrow I will myself settle whom they shall belong to.'

The laws of the Udaller in his own house were absolute as those of the Medes. The two young men, regarding each other with looks of sullen displeasure, drew off in different directions.

It is seldom that the second day of a prolonged festival equals the first. The spirits, as well as the limbs, are jaded, and unequal to the renewed expenditure of animation and exertion ; and the dance at Burgh-Westra was sustained with much less mirth than on the preceding evening. It was yet

an hour from midnight, when even the reluctant Magnus Troil, after regretting the degeneracy of the times, and wishing he could transfuse into the modern Hialtlanders some of the vigour which still animated his own frame, found himself compelled to give the signal for general retreat.

Just as this took place, Halero, leading Mordaunt Mertoun a little aside, said he had a message to him from Captain Cleveland.

'A message!' said Mordaunt, his heart beating somewhat thick as he spoke. 'A challenge, I suppose!'

'A challenge!' repeated Halero; 'who ever heard of a challenge in our quiet islands? Do you think that I look like a carrier of challenges, and to you of all men living? I am none of those fighting fools, as glorious John calls them; and it was not quite a message I had to deliver — only thus far, this Captain Cleveland, I find, hath set his heart upon having these articles you looked at.'

'He shall not have them, I swear to you,' replied Mordaunt Mertoun.

'Nay, but hear me,' said Halero; 'it seems that, by the marks or arms that are upon them, he knows that they were formerly his property. Now, were you to give me the box, as you promised, I fairly tell you I should give the man back his own.'

'And Brenda might do the like,' thought Mordaunt to himself, and instantly replied aloud, 'I have thought better of it, my friend. Captain Cleveland shall have the toys he sets such store by, but it is on one sole condition.'

'Nay, you will spoil all with your conditions,' said Halero; 'for, as glorious John says, conditions are but —'

'Hear me, I say, with patience. My condition is, that he keeps the toys in exchange for the rifle-gun I accepted from him, which will leave no obligation between us on either side.'

'I see where you would be: this is Sebastian and Dorax all over. Well, you may let the jagger know he is to deliver the things to Cleveland — I think he is mad to have them — and I will let Cleveland know the conditions annexed, otherwise honest Bryce might come by two payments instead of one; and I believe his conscience would not choke upon it.'

With these words Halero went to seek out Cleveland; while Mordaunt, observing Snailsfoot, who, as a sort of privileged person, had thrust himself into the crowd at the bottom of the dancing-room, went up to him, and gave him directions to

deliver the disputed articles to Cleveland as soon as he had an opportunity.

'Ye are in the right, Maister Mordaunt,' said the jagger; 'ye are a prudent and a sensible lad — a calm answer turneth away wrath; and mysell, I sall be willing to please you in ony trifling matters in my sma' way; for, between the Udaller of Burgh-Westra and Captain Cleveland, a man is, as it were, atween the deil and the deep sea; and it was like that the Udaller, in the end, would have taken your part in the dispute, for he is a man that loves justice.'

'Which apparently you care very little about, Master Snailsfoot,' said Mordaunt, 'otherwise there could have been no dispute whatever, the right being so clearly on my side, if you had pleased to bear witness according to the dictates of truth.'

'Maister Mordaunt,' said the jagger, 'I must own there was, as it were, a colouring or shadow of justice on your side; but then the justice that I meddle with is only justice in the way of trade — to have an ell-wand of due length, if it be not something worn out with leaning on it in my lang and painful journeys, and to buy and sell by just weight and measure, twenty-four merks to the lispund; but I have nothing to do, to do justice betwixt man and man, like a fowd or a lawright-man at a law-ting lang syne.'

'No one asked you to do so, but only to give evidence according to your conscience,' replied Mordaunt, not greatly pleased either with the part the jagger had acted during the dispute or the construction which he seemed to put on his own motives for yielding up the point.

But Bryce Snailsfoot wanted not his answer. 'My conscience,' he said, 'Maister Mordaunt, is as tender as ony man's in my degree; but she is something of a timorsome nature, cannot abide angry folk, and can never speak above her breath when there is aught of a fray going forward. Indeed, she hath at all times a small and low voice.'

'Which you are not much in the habit of listening to,' said Mordaunt.

'There is that on your ain breast that proves the contrary,' said Bryce, resolutely.

'In my breast!' said Mordaunt, somewhat angrily; 'what know I of you?'

'I said *on* your breast, Maister Mordaunt, and not *in* it. I am sure nae eye that looks on that waistcoat upon your gallant brisket but will say that the merchant who sold such

a piece for four dollars had justice and conscience, an' a kind heart to a customer to the boot of a' that ; sae y' shouldna be sae thrawart wi' me for having spared the breath of my mouth in a fool's quarrel.'

'I thrawart !' said Mordaunt ; 'pooh, you silly man ! I have no quarrel with you.'

'I am glad of it,' said the travelling-merchant. 'I will quarrel' with no man, with my will, least of all with an old customer ; and if you will walk by my advice, you will quarrel nane with Captain Cleveland. He is like one of yon cutters and slaughter that have come into Kirkwall, that think as little of slicing a man as we do of flinching a whale : it's their trade to fight, and they live by it ; and they have the advantage of the like of you, that only take it up at your own hand, and in the way of pastime, when you hae nothing better to do.'

The company had now almost all dispersed ; and Mordaunt, laughing at the jagger's caution, bade him good-night, and went to his own place of repose, which had been assigned to him by Eric Scambester (who acted the part of chamberlain as well as butler) in a small room, or rather closet, in one of the out-houses, furnished for the occasion with the hammock of a sailor.

CHAPTER XIX

I pass like night from land to land,
I have strange power of speech ;
So soon as e'er his face I see,
I know the man that must hear me,
To him my tale I teach.

COLERIDGE'S *Rime of the Ancient Mariner*.

THE daughters of Magnus Troil shared the same bed, in a chamber which had been that of their parents before the death of their mother. Magnus, who suffered grievously under that dispensation of Providence, had become disgusted with the apartment. The nuptial chamber was abandoned to the pledges of his bereaved affection, of whom the eldest was at that period only four years old, or thereabouts ; and, having been their nursery in infancy, continued, though now tricked and adorned according to the best fashion of the islands and the taste of the lovely sisters themselves, to be their sleeping-room, or, in the old Norse dialect, their bower.

It had been for many years the scene of the most intimate confidence, if that could be called confidence where, in truth, there was nothing to be confided ; where neither sister had a secret ; and where every thought that had birth in the bosom of the one was, without either hesitation or doubt, confided to the other as spontaneously as it had arisen. But, since Cleveland abode in the mansion of Burgh-Westra, each of the lovely sisters had entertained thoughts which are not lightly or easily communicated, unless she who listens to them has previously assured herself that the confidence will be kindly received. Minna had noticed what other and less interested observers had been unable to perceive, that Cleveland, namely, held a lower rank in Brenda's opinion than in her own ; and Brenda, on her side, thought that Minna had hastily and unjustly joined in the prejudices which had been excited against Mordaunt Mertoun in the mind of their father. Each was sensible that she was no longer the same to her sister ; and this convic-

tion was a painful addition to other painful apprehensions which they supposed they had to struggle with. Their manner towards each other was, in outward appearances, and in all the little cares by which affection can be expressed, even more assiduously kind than before, as if both, conscious that their internal reserve was a breach of their sisterly union, strove to atone for it by double assiduity in those external marks of affection which, at other times, when there was nothing to hide, might be omitted without inferring any consequences.

On the night referred to, in particular, the sisters felt more especially the decay of the confidence which used to exist betwixt them. The proposed voyage to Kirkwall, and that at the time of the fair, when persons of every degree in these islands repair thither, either for business or amusement, was likely to be an important incident in lives usually so simple and uniform as theirs; and, a few months ago, Minna and Brenda would have been awake half the night, anticipating, in their talk with each other, all that was likely to happen on so momentous an occasion. But now the subject was just mentioned and suffered to drop, as if the topic was likely to produce a difference betwixt them, or to call forth a more open display of their several opinions than either was willing to make to the other.

Yet such was their natural openness and gentleness of disposition, that each sister imputed to herself the fault that there was aught like estrangement existing between them; and when, having finished their devotions and betaken themselves to their couch, they folded each other in their arms, and exchanged a sisterly kiss and a sisterly good-night, they seemed mutually to ask pardon and to exchange forgiveness, although neither said a word of offence, either offered or received; and both were soon plunged in that light and yet profound repose which is only enjoyed when sleep sinks down on the eyes of youth and innocence.

On the night to which the story relates, both sisters were visited by dreams, which, though varied by the moods and habits of the sleepers, bore yet a strange general resemblance to each other.

Minna dreamed that she was in one of the most lonely recesses of the beach, called Swartaster, where the incessant operation of the waves, indenting a calcareous rock, has formed a deep 'halier,' which, in the language of the island, means a subterranean cavern, into which the tide ebbs and flows. Many

of these run to an extraordinary and unascertained depth under ground, and are the secure retreat of cormorants and seals, which it is neither easy nor safe to pursue to their extreme recesses. Amongst these, this halier of Swartaster was accounted peculiarly inaccessible, and shunned both by fowlers and by seamen, on account of sharp angles and turnings in the cave itself, as well as the sunken rocks which rendered it very dangerous for skiffs or boats to advance far into it, especially if there was the usual swell of an island tide. From the dark-browed mouth of this cavern, it seemed to Minna, in her dream, that she beheld a mermaid issue, not in the classical dress of a nereid, as in Claud Halcro's mask of the preceding evening, but with comb and glass in hand, according to popular belief, and lashing the waves with that long scaly train which, in the traditions of the country, forms so frightful a contrast with the fair face, long tresses, and displayed bosom of a human and earthly female of surpassing beauty. She seemed to beckon to Minna, while her wild notes rang sadly in her ear, and denounced, in prophetic sounds, calamity and woe.

The vision of Brenda was of a different description, yet equally melancholy. She sat, as she thought, in her favourite bower, surrounded by her father and a party of his most beloved friends, amongst whom Mordaunt Mertoun was not forgotten. She was required to sing; and she strove to entertain them with a lively ditty, in which she was accounted eminently successful, and which she sung with such simple yet natural humour as seldom failed to produce shouts of laughter and applause, while all who could, or who could not, sing were irresistibly compelled to lend their voices to the chorus. But on this occasion it seemed as if her own voice refused all its usual duty, and as if, while she felt herself unable to express the words of the well-known air, it assumed, in her own despite, the deep tones and wild and melancholy notes of Norna of Fitful Head, for the purpose of chanting some wild Runic rhyme, resembling those sung by the heathen priests of old, when the victim, too often human, was bound to the fatal altar of Odin or of Thor.

At length the two sisters at once started from sleep, and, uttering a low scream of fear, clasped themselves in each other's arms. For their fancy had not altogether played them false: the sounds which had suggested their dreams were real, and sung within their apartment. They knew the voice well, indeed, and yet, knowing to whom it belonged, their surprise and fear

were scarce the less when they saw the well-known Norna of Fitful Head seated by the chimney of the apartment, which, during the summer season, contained an iron lamp well trimmed, and in winter a fire of wood or of turf.

She was wrapped in her long and ample garment of wadmaal, and moved her body slowly to and fro over the pale flame of the lamp, as she sung lines to the following purport, in a slow, sad, and almost an unearthly accent :

' For leagues along the watery way,
Through gulf and stream my course has been ;
The billows know my Runic lay,
And smooth their crests to silent green.

The billows know my Runic lay, —
The gulf grows smooth, the stream is still ;
But human hearts, more wild than they,
Know but the rule of wayward will.

One hour is mine, in all the year,
To tell my woes, and one alone :
When gleams this magic lamp, 't is here ;
When dies the mystic light, 't is gone.

Daughters of northern Magnus, hail !
The lamp is lit, the flame is clear, —
To you I come to tell my tale,
Awake, arise, my tale to hear !'

Norna was well known to the daughters of Troil, but it was not without emotion, although varied by their respective dispositions, that they beheld her so unexpectedly, and at such an hour. Their opinions with respect to the supernatural attributes to which she pretended were extremely different.

Minna, with an unusual intensity of imagination, although superior in talent to her sister, was more apt to listen to, and delight in, every tale of wonder, and was at all times more willing to admit impressions which gave her fancy scope and exercise, without minutely examining their reality. Brenda, on the other hand, had, in her gaiety, a slight propensity to satire, and was often tempted to laugh at the very circumstances upon which Minna founded her imaginative dreams ; and, like all who love the ludicrous, she did not readily suffer herself to be imposed upon, or overawed, by pompous pretensions of any kind whatever. But, as her nerves were weaker and more irritable than those of her sister, she often paid involuntary homage, by her fears, to ideas which her reason

disowned ; and hence Claud Halero used to say, in reference to many of the traditionary superstitions around Burgh-Westra, that Minna believed them without trembling, and that Brenda trembled without believing them. In our own more enlightened days there are few whose undoubting mind and native courage have not felt Minna's high-wrought tone of enthusiasm ; and perhaps still fewer who have not, at one time or other, felt, like Brenda, their nerves confess the influence of terrors which their reason disowned and despised.

Under the power of such different feelings, Minna, when the first moment of surprise was over, prepared to spring from her bed and go to greet Norna, who, she doubted not, had come on some errand fraught with fate ; while Brenda, who only beheld in her a woman partially deranged in her understanding, and who yet, from the extravagance of her claims, regarded her as an undefined object of awe, or rather terror, detained her sister by an eager and terrified grasp, while she whispered in her ear an anxious entreaty that she would call for assistance. But the soul of Minna was too highly wrought up by the crisis at which her fate seemed to have arrived to permit her to follow the dictates of her sister's fears ; and, extricating herself from Brenda's hold, she hastily threw on a loose nightgown, and, stepping boldly across the apartment, while her heart throbbed rather with high excitement than with fear, she thus addressed her singular visitor :

'Norna, if your mission regards us, as your words seem to express, there is one of us, at least, who will receive its import with reverence, but without fear.'

'Norna — dear Norna,' said the tremulous voice of Brenda, who, feeling no safety in the bed after Minna quitted it, had followed her, as fugitives crowd into the rear of an advancing army, because they dare not remain behind, and who now stood half concealed by her sister, and holding fast by the skirts of her gown — 'Norna — dear Norna,' said she, 'whatever you are to say, let it be to-morrow. I will call Euphane Fea, the house-keeper, and she will find you a bed for the night.'

'No bed for me!' said their nocturnal visitor ; 'no closing of the eyes for me! They have watched as shelf and stack appeared and disappeared betwixt Burgh-Westra and Orkney ; they have seen the Man of Hoy sink into the sea, and the Peak of Hengcliff arise from it, and yet they have not tasted of slumber ; nor must they slumber now till my task is ended. Sit down, then, Minna, and thou, silly trembler, sit down, while

I trim my lamp. Don your clothes, for the tale is long, and ere 't is done ye will shiver with worse than cold.'

'For Heaven's sake, then, put it off till daylight, dear Norna!' said Brenda; 'the dawn cannot be far distant, and if you are to tell us of anything frightful, let it be by daylight, and not by the dim glimmer of that blue lamp!'

'Patience, fool!' said their uninvited guest. 'Not by daylight should Norna tell a tale that might blot the sun out of heaven, and blight the hopes of the hundred boats that will leave this shore ere noon to commence their deep-sea fishing — ay, and of the hundred families that will await their return. The demon, whom the sounds will not fail to awaken, must shake his dark wings over a shipless and a boatless sea, as he rushes from his mountain to drink the accents of horror he loves so well to listen to.'

'Have pity on Brenda's fears, good Norna,' said the elder sister, 'and at least postpone this frightful communication to another place and hour.'

'Maiden, no!' replied Norna, sternly; 'it must be told while that lamp yet burns. Mine is no daylight tale: by that lamp it must be told, which is framed out of the gibbet-irons of the cruel Lord of Wodensvoe, who murdered his brother; and has for its nourishment — but be that nameless — enough that its food never came either from the fish or from the fruit! See, it waxes dim and dimmer, nor must my tale last longer than its flame endureth. Sit ye down there, while I sit here opposite to you, and place the lamp betwixt us; for within the sphere of its light the demon dares not venture.'

The sisters obeyed, Minna casting a slow, awe-struck, yet determined look all around, as if to see the being who, according to the doubtful words of Norna, hovered in their neighbourhood; while Brenda's fears were mingled with some share both of anger and of impatience. Norna paid no attention to either, but began her story in the following words: —

'Ye know, my daughters, that your blood is allied to mine, but in what degree ye know not; for there was early hostility betwixt your grandsire and him who had the misfortune to call me daughter. Let me term him by his Christian name of Erland, for that which marks our relation I dare not bestow. Your grandsire Olave was the brother of Erland. But when the wide udal possessions of their father Rolfe Troil, the most rich and well-estated of any who descended from the old Norse stock, were divided betwixt the brothers, the fowd gave to

Erland his father's lands in Orkney, and reserved for Olave those of Hialtland. Discord arose between the brethren; for Erland held that he was wronged; and when the law ting,¹ with the raddmen and lawright-men, confirmed the division, he went in wrath to Orkney, cursing Hialtland and its inhabitants — cursing his brother and his blood.

'But the love of the rock and of the mountain still wrought on Erland's mind, and he fixed his dwelling not on the soft hills of Ophir or the green plains of Graemsay, but in the wild and mountainous Isle of Hoy,² whose summit rises to the sky like the cliffs of Foulah and of Feroe. He knew — that unhappy Erland — whatever of legendary lore Scald and bard had left behind them; and to teach me that knowledge, which was to cost us both so dear, was the chief occupation of his old age. I learned to visit each lonely barrow, each lofty cairn; to tell its appropriate tale, and to soothe with rhymes in his praise the spirit of the stern warrior who dwelt within. I knew where the sacrifices were made of yore to Thor and to Odin; on what stones the blood of the victims flowed; where stood the dark-browed priest; where the crested chiefs, who consulted the will of the idol; where the more distant crowd of inferior worshippers, who looked on in awe or in terror. The places most shunned by the timid peasants had no terrors for me: I dared walk in the fairy circle, and sleep by the magic spring.

'But, for my misfortune, I was chiefly fond to linger about the Dwarfie Stone,³ as it is called, a relic of antiquity, which strangers look on with curiosity and the natives with awe. It is a huge fragment of rock, which lies in a broken and rude valley, full of stones and precipices, in the recesses of the Ward Hill of Hoy. The inside of the rock has two couches, hewn by no earthly hand, and having a small passage between them. The doorway is now open to the weather; but beside it lies a large stone, which, adapted to grooves still visible in the entrance, once had served to open and to close this extraordinary dwelling, which Trolld, a dwarf famous in the Northern sagas, is said to have framed for his own favourite residence. The lonely shepherd avoids the place; for at sunrise, high noon, or sunset — a misshapen form of the necromantic owner may sometimes still be seen sitting by the Dwarfie Stone. I feared not the apparition, for, Minna, my heart was as bold and my hand ~~was as~~ as innocent as yours. In my childish courage, I was even but too presumptuous, and the thirst after things unattainable

¹ See Note 22.

² See Note 23.

³ See Note 24.

led me, like our primitive mother, to desire increase of knowledge even by prohibited means. I longed to possess the power of the voluspæ and divining-women of our ancient race; to wield, like them, command over the elements; and to summon the ghosts of deceased heroes from their caverns, that they might recite their daring deeds and impart to me their hidden treasures. Often, when watching by the Dwarfie Stone, with mine eyes fixed on the Ward Hill, which rises above that gloomy valley, I have distinguished, among the dark rocks, that wonderful carbuncle,¹ which gleams ruddy as a furnace to them who view it from beneath, but has ever become invisible to him whose daring foot has scaled the precipices from which it darts its splendour. My vain and youthful bosom burned to investigate these and an hundred other mysteries, which the sagas that I perused, or learned from Erland, rather indicated than explained; and in my daring mood I called on the lord of the Dwarfie Stone to aid me in attaining knowledge inaccessible to mere mortals.

'And the evil spirit heard your summons?' said Minna, her blood curdling as she listened.

'Hush,' said Norna, lowering her voice, 'vex him not with reproach; he is with us — he hears us even now.'

Brenda started from her seat. 'I will to Euphane Fea's chamber,' she said, 'and leave you, Minna and Norna, to finish your stories of hobgoblins and of dwarfs at your own leisure. I care not for them at any time, but I will not endure them at midnight, and by this pale lamplight.'

She was accordingly in the act of leaving the room, when her sister detained her.

'Is this the courage,' she said, 'of her that disbelieves whatever the history of our fathers tells us of supernatural prodigy? What Norna has to tell concerns the fate, perhaps, of our father and his house; if I can listen to it, trusting that God and my innocence will protect me from all that is malignant, you, Brenda, who believe not in such influence, have surely no cause to tremble. Credit me, that for the guiltless there is no fear.'

'There may be no danger,' said Brenda, unable to suppress her natural turn for humour, 'but, as the old jest-book says, there is much fear. However, Minna, I will stay with you; the rather,' she added in a whisper, 'that I am loth to leave you alone with this frightful woman, and that I have a dark

¹ See Note 25.

staircase and long passage betwixt [us] and Euphane Fea, else I would have her here ere I were five minutes older.'

'Call no one hither, maiden, upon peril of thy life,' said Norna, 'and interrupt not my tale again; for it cannot and must not be told after that charmed light has ceased to burn.'

'And I thank Heaven,' said Brenda to herself, 'that the oil burns low in the cruise! I am sorely tempted to lend it a puff, but then Norna would be alone with us in the dark, and that would be worse.'

So saying, she submitted to her fate, and sat down, determined to listen with all the equanimity which she could command to the remaining part of Norna's tale, which went on as follows:—

'It happened on a hot summer day, and just about the hour of noon,' continued Norna, 'as I sat by the Dwarfie Stone, with my eyes fixed on the Ward Hill, whence the mysterious and ever-burning carbuncle shed its rays more brightly than usual, and repined in my heart at the restricted bounds of human knowledge, that at length I could not help exclaiming, in the words of an ancient saga,

"Dwellers of the mountain, rise,
Troll'd the powerful, Haims the wise!
Ye who taught weak woman's tongue
Words that sway the wise and strong,—
Ye who taught weak woman's hand
How to wield the magic wand,
And wake the gales on Foulah's steep,
Or lull wild Sumburgh's waves to sleep!
Still are ye yet? Not yours the power
Ye knew in Odin's mightier hour.
What are ye now but empty names,
Powerful Troll'd, sagacious Haims,
That, lightly spoken, lightly heard,
Float on the air like thistle's beard?"

'I had scarce uttered these words,' proceeded Norna, 'ere the sky, which had been till then unusually clear, grew so suddenly dark around me that it seemed more like midnight than noon. A single flash of lightning showed me at once the desolate landscape of heath, morass, mountain, and precipice which lay around; a single clap of thunder wakened all the echoes of the Ward Hill, which continued so long to repeat the sound, that it seemed some rock, rent by the thunderbolt from the summit, was rolling over cliff and precipice into the valley. Immediately after fell a burst of rain so violent that I was

vain to shun its pelting by creeping into the interior of the mysterious stone.

'I seated myself on the larger stone couch, which is cut at the farther end of the cavity, and, with my eyes fixed on the smaller bed, wearied myself with conjectures respecting the origin and purpose of my singular place of refuge. Had it been really the work of that powerful Trolld to whom the poetry of the Sealds referred it? Or was it the tomb of some Scandinavian chief, interred with his arms and his wealth, perhaps also with his immolated wife, that what he loved best in life might not in death be divided from him? Or was it the abode of penance, chosen by some devoted anchorite of later days? Or the idle work of some wandering mechanic, whom chance, and whim, and leisure, had thrust upon such an undertaking? I tell you the thoughts that then floated through my brain, that you may know that what ensued was not the vision of a prejudiced or prepossessed imagination, but an apparition, as certain as it was awful.

'Sleep had gradually crept on me, amidst my lucubrations, when I was startled from my slumbers by a second clap of thunder; and, when I awoke, I saw, through the dim light which the upper aperture admitted, the unshapely and indistinct form of Trolld the dwarf, seated opposite to me on the lesser couch, which his square and misshapen bulk seemed absolutely to fill up. I was startled, but not affrighted; for the blood of the ancient race of Lochlin was warm in my veins. He spoke; and his words were of Norse, so old that few, save my father or I myself, could have comprehended their import — such language as was spoken in these islands ere Olave planted the cross on the ruins of heathenism. His meaning was dark also and obscure, like that which the pagan priests were wont to deliver, in the name of their idols, to the tribes that assembled at the Helgafels.¹ This was the import —

"A thousand winters dark have flown,
Since o'er the threshold of my stone
A votaress pass'd, my power to own.
Visitor bold
Of the mansion of Trolld,
Maiden haughty of heart,
Who hast hither presumed —
Ungifted, undoom'd.
Thou shalt not depart :

¹ Or consecrated mountain, used by the Scandinavian priests for the purposes of the idol-worship.

THE PIRATE

The power thou dost covet
 O'er tempest and wave,
 Shall be thine, thou proud maiden,
 By beach and by cave, —
 By stark¹ and by skerry,² by noup³ and by voc,⁴
 By air⁵ and by wick,⁶ and by helyer⁷ and glo,⁸
 And by every wild shore which the northern winds know,
 And the northern tides lave.
 But though this shall be given thee, thou desperately brave,
 I doom thee that never the gift thou shalt have,
 Till thou reave thy life's giver
 Of the gift which he gave."

'I answered him in nearly the same strain; for the spirit of the ancient Scalds of our race was upon me, and, far from fearing the phantom, with whom I sat cooped within so narrow a space, I felt the impulse of that high courage which thrust the ancient champions and Druidesses upon contests with the invisible world, when they thought that the earth no longer contained enemies worthy to be subdued by them. Therefore did I answer him thus —

"Dark are thy words, and severe,
 Thou dweller in the stone;
 But trembling and fear
 To her are unknown,
 Who hath sought thee here
 In thy dwelling lone.
 Come what comes soever,
 The worst I can endure;
 Life is but a short fever,
 And death is the cure."

'The demon scowled at me, as if at once incensed and overawed; and then coiling himself up in a thick and sulphureous vapour, he disappeared from his place. I did not, till that moment, feel the influence of fright, but then it seized me. I rushed into the open air, where the tempest had passed away, and all was pure and serene. After a moment's breathless pause, I hasted home, musing by the way on the words of the

¹ *Stack* — a precipitous rock rising out of the sea.
² *Skerry* — a flat insulated rock, not subject to the overflowing of the sea.
³ *Noup* — a round-headed eminence.
⁴ *Voc* — a creek or inlet of the sea.
⁵ *Air* — an open sea-beach.
⁶ *Wick* — an open bay.
⁷ *Helyer* — a cavern into which the tide flows.
⁸ *Glo* — a deep ravine which admits the sea.

phantom, which I could not, as often happens, recall so distinctly to memory at the time as I have been since able to do.

'It may seem strange that such an apparition should, in time, have glided from my mind like a vision of the night; but so it was. I brought myself to believe it the work of fancy; I thought I had lived too much in solitude, and had given way too much to the feelings inspired by my favourite studies. I abandoned them for a time, and I mixed with the youth of my age. I was upon a visit at Kirkwall when I learned to know your father, whom business had brought thither. He easily found access to the relation with whom I lived, who was anxious to compose, if possible, the feud which divided our families. Your father, maidens, has been rather hardened than changed by years: he had the same manly form, the same old Norse frankness of manner and of heart, the same upright courage and honesty of disposition, with more of the gentle ingenuousness of youth, an eager desire to please, a willingness to be pleased, and a vivacity of spirits which survives not our early years. But though he was thus worthy of love, and though Erland wrote to me authorising his attachment, there was another — a stranger, Minna, a fatal stranger — full of arts unknown to us, and graces which to the plain manners of your father were unknown. Yes, he walked, indeed, among us like a being of another and of a superior race. Ye look on me as if it were strange that I should have had attractions for such a lover; but I present nothing that can remind you that Norna of the Fitful Head was once admired and loved as Ulla Troil: the change betwixt the animated body and the corpse after decease is scarce more awful and absolute than I have sustained while I yet linger on earth. Look on me, maidens — look on me by this glimmering light. Can ye believe that these haggard and weather-wasted features; these eyes, which have been almost converted to stone by looking upon sights of terror; these locks, that, mingled with grey, now stream out, the shattered pennons of a sinking vessel that these, and she to whom they belong, could once be the objects of fond affection? But the waning lamp sinks fast, and let it sink while I tell my infamy. We loved in secret, we met in secret, till I gave the last proof of fatal and of guilty passion! And now beam out, thou magic glimmer: shine out a little space, thou flame so powerful even in thy feebleness; bid him who hovers near us keep his dark pinions aloof from the circle thou dost illuminate; live but a little till the worst

be told, and then sink when thou wilt into darkness as black as my guilt and sorrow !'

While she spoke thus, she drew together the remaining nutriment of the lamp, and trimmed its decaying flame : then again, with a hollow voice and in broken sentences, pursued her narrative.

'I must waste little time in words. My love was discovered, but not my guilt. Erland came to Pomona in anger, and transported me to our solitary dwelling in Hoy. He commanded me to see my lover no more, and to receive Magnus, in whom he was willing to forgive the offences of his father, as my future husband. Alas ! I no longer deserved his attachment ; my only wish was to escape from my father's dwelling, to conceal my shame in my lover's arms. Let me do him justice : he was faithful — too, too faithful ; his perfidy would have bereft me of my senses, but the fatal consequences of his fidelity have done me a tenfold injury.'

She paused, and then resumed, with the wild tone of insanity, 'It has made me the powerful and the despairing sovereign of the seas and winds !'

She paused a second time after this wild exclamation, and resumed her narrative in a more composed manner.

'My lover came in secret to Hoy, to concert measures for my flight, and I agree' to meet him, that we might fix the time when his vessel should come into the sound. I left the house at midnight.'

Here she appeared to gasp with agony, and went on with her tale by broken and interrupted sentences. 'I left the house at midnight. I had to pass my father's door, and I perceived it was open. I thought he watched us ; and, that the sound of my steps might not break his slumbers, I closed the fatal door — a light and trivial action, but, God in Heaven ! what were the consequences ! At morn the room was full of suffocating vapour — my father was dead — dead through my act — dead through my disobedience — dead through my infamy ! All that follows is mist and darkness — a choking, suffocating, stifling mist envelopes all that I said and did, all that was said and done, until I became assured that my doom was accomplished, and walked forth the calm and terrible being you now behold me — the queen of the elements — the sharer in the power of those beings to whom man and his passions give such sport as the tortures of the dog-fish afford the fisherman, when he pierces his eyes with thorns, and turns him once more into

his native element, to traverse the waves in blindness and agony.¹ No, maidens, she whom you see before you is impassive to the follies of which your minds are the sport. I am she that have made the offering — I am she that bereaved the giver of the gift of life which he gave me: the dark saying has been interpreted by my deed, and I am taken from humanity, to be something pre-eminently powerful, pre-eminently wretched!

As she spoke thus, the light, which had been long quivering, leaped high for an instant, and seemed about to expire, when Norna, interrupting herself, said hastily, 'No more now -- he comes -- he comes. Enough that ye know me, and the right I have to advise and command you. Approach now, proud spirit! if thou wilt.'

So saying, she extinguished the lamp, and passed out of the apartment with her usual loftiness of step, as Minna could observe from its measured cadence.

¹ This cruelty is practised by some fishers, out of a vindictive hatred to these ravenous fishes.

CHAPTER XX

Is all the counsel that we two have shared —
The sisters' vows, the hours that we have spent,
When we have chid the hasty-footed time
For parting us — Oh, and is all forgot ?

Midsummer Night's Dream.

THE attention of Minna was powerfully arrested by this tale of terror, which accorded with and explained many broken hints respecting Norna which she had heard from her father and other near relations, and she was for a time so lost in surprise, not unmingled with horror, that she did not even attempt to speak to her sister Brenda. When, at length, she called her by her name, she received no answer, and, on touching her hand, she found it cold as ice. Alarmed to the uttermost, she threw open the lattice and the window-shutters, and admitted at once the free air and the pale glimmer of the hyperborean summer night. She then became sensible that her sister was in a swoon. All thoughts concerning Norna, her frightful tale, and her mysterious connexion with the invisible world, at once vanished from Minna's thoughts, and she hastily ran to the apartment of the old housekeeper, to summon her aid, without reflecting for a moment what sights she might encounter in the long dark passages which she had to traverse.

The old woman hastened to Brenda's assistance, and instantly applied such remedies as her experience suggested ; but the poor girl's nervous system had been so much agitated by the horrible tale she had just heard that, when recovered from her swoon, her utmost endeavours to compose her mind could not prevent her falling into a hysterical fit of some duration. This also was subdued by the experience of old Euphane Fea, who was well versed in all the simple pharmacy used by the natives of Zetland, and who, after administering a composing-draught, distilled from simples and wild flowers, at length saw her patient resigned to sleep. Minna stretched herself beside her sister, kissed her

cheek, and courted slumber in her turn ; but the more she invoked it, the farther it seemed to fly from her eyelids ; and if at times she was disposed to sink into repose, the voice of the involuntary parricide seemed again to sound in her ears, and startled her into consciousness.

The early morning hour at which they were accustomed to rise found the state of the sisters different from what might have been expected. A sound sleep had restored the spirit of Brenda's lightsome eye, and the rose on her laughing cheek ; the transient indisposition of the preceding night having left as little trouble on her look as the fantastic terrors of Norna's tale had been able to impress on her imagination. The looks of Minna, on the contrary, were melancholy, downcast, and apparently exhausted by watching and anxiety. They said at first little to each other, as if afraid of touching a subject so fraught with emotion as the scene of the preceding night. It was not until they had performed together their devotions, as usual, that Brenda, while lacing Minna's bodice (for they rendered the services of the toilet to each other reciprocally), became aware of the paleness of her sister's looks ; and having ascertained, by a glance at the mirror, that her own did not wear the same dejection, she kissed Minna's cheek, and said affectionately, 'Claud Halcro was right, my dearest sister, when his poetical folly gave us these names of Night and Day.'

'And wherefore should you say so now ?' said Minna.

'Because we each are bravest in the season that we take our name from : I was frightened wellnigh to death by hearing those things last night which you endured with courageous firmness ; and now, when it is broad light, I can think of them with composure, while you look as pale as a spirit who is surprised by sunrise.'

'You are lucky, Brenda,' said her sister, gravely, 'who can so soon forget such a tale of wonder and horror.'

'The horror,' said Brenda, 'is never to be forgotten, unless one could hope that the unfortunate woman's excited imagination, which shows itself so active in conjuring up apparitions may have fixed on her an imaginary crime.'

'You believe nothing, then,' said Minna, 'of her interview at the Dwarfie Stone, that wondrous place, of which so many tales are told, and which, for so many centuries, has been revered as the work of a demon, and as his abode ?'

'I believe,' said Brenda, 'that our unhappy relative is no impostor ; and therefore I believe that she was at the Dwarfie

Stone during a thunderstorm, that she sought shelter in it, and that, during a swoon, or during sleep perhaps, some dream visited her, concerned with the popular traditions with which she was so conversant ; but I cannot easily believe more.'

'And yet the event,' said Minna, 'corresponded to the dark intimations of the vision.'

'Pardon me,' said Brenda, 'I rather think the dream would never have been put into shape, or perhaps remembered at all, but for the event. She told us herself she had nearly forgot the vision, till after her father's dreadful death ; and who shall warrant how much of what she then supposed herself to remember was not the creation of her own fancy, disordered as it naturally was by the horrid accident ? Had she really seen and conversed with a necromantic dwarf, she was likely to remember the conversation long enough — at least I am sure I should.'

'Brenda,' replied Minna, 'you have heard the good minister of the Cross kirk say, that human wisdom was worse than folly, when it was applied to mysteries beyond its comprehension ; and that, if we believed no more than we could understand, we should resist the evidence of our senses, which presented us, at every turn, circumstances as certain as they were unintelligible.'

'You are too learned yourself, sister,' answered Brenda, 'to need the assistance of the good minister of Cross kirk ; but I think his doctrine only related to the mysteries of our religion, which it is our duty to receive without investigation or doubt ; but in things occurring in common life, as God has bestowed reason upon us, we cannot act wrong in employing it. But you, my dear Minna, have a warmer fancy than mine, and are willing to receive all those wonderful stories for truth, because you love to think of sorcerers, and dwarfs, and water-spirits, and would like much to have a little trow, or fairy, as the Scotch call them, with a green coat, and a pair of wings as brilliant as the hues of the starling's neck, specially to attend on you.'

'It would spare you at least the trouble of lacing my boddice,' said Minna, 'and of lacing it wrong, too ; for in the heat of your argument you have missed two eyelet-holes.'

'That error shall be presently mended,' said Brenda ; 'and then, as one of our friends might say, I will haul tight and belay — but you draw your breath so deeply, that it will be a difficult matter.'

'I only sighed,' said Minna, in some confusion, 'to think how soon you can trifle with and ridicule the misfortunes of this extraordinary woman.'

'I do not ridicule them, God knows!' replied Brenda, somewhat angrily; 'it is you, Minna, who turn all I say in truth and kindness to something harsh or wicked. I look on Norna as a woman of very extraordinary abilities, which are very often reconciled with a strong cast of insanity; and I consider her as better skilled in the signs of the weather than any woman in Zetland. But that she has any power over the elements I no more believe than I do in the nursery stories of King Erick, who could make the wind blow from the point he set his cap to.'

Minna, somewhat nettled with the obstinate incredulity of her sister, replied sharply, 'And yet, Brenda, this woman — half-mad woman, and the veriest impostor — is the person by whom you choose to be advised in the matter next your own heart at this moment!'

'I do not know what you mean,' said Brenda, colouring deeply, and shifting to get away from her sister. But as she was now undergoing the ceremony of being laced in her turn, her sister had the means of holding her fast by the silken string with which she was fastening the boddice, and, tapping her on the neck, which expressed, by its sudden writhe and sudden change to a scarlet hue, as much pettish confusion as she had desired to provoke, she added, more mildly, 'Is it not strange, Brenda, that, used as we have been by the stranger Mordaunt Mertoun, whose assurance has brought him uninvited to a house where his presence is so unacceptable, you should still look on or think of him with favour? Surely, that you do so should be a proof to you that there are such things as spells in the country, and that you yourself labour under them. It is not for nought that Mordaunt wears a chain of elfin gold; look to it, Brenda, and be wise in time.'

'I have nothing to do with Mordaunt Mertoun,' answered Brenda, hastily, 'nor do I know or care what he or any other young man wears about his neck. I could see all the gold chains of all the bailies of Edinburgh, that Lady Glowrowrum speaks so much of, without falling in fancy with one of the wearers.' And, having thus complied with the female rule of pleading not guilty in general to such an indictment, she immediately resumed, in a different tone, 'But, to say the truth, Minna, I think you, and all of you, have judged far too hastily about this young friend of ours, who has been so long our most intimate companion. Mind, Mordaunt Mertoun is no more to me than he is to you, who best know how little differ-

once he made betwixt us ; and that, chain or no chain, he lived with us like a brother with two sisters ; and yet you can turn him off at once, because a wandering seaman, of whom we know nothing, and a peddling jagger, whom we well know to be a thief, a cheat, and a liar, speak words and carry tales in his disfavour ! I do not believe he ever said he could have his choice of either of us, and only waited to see which was to have Burgh-Westra and Bredness Voe. I do not believe he ever spoke such a word, or harboured such a thought, as that of making a choice between us.'

'Perhaps,' said Minna, coldly, 'you may have had reason to know that his choice was already determined.'

'I will not endure this !' said Brenda, giving way to her natural vivacity, and springing from between her sister's hands ; then turning round and facing her, while her glowing cheek was rivalled in the deepness of its crimson by as much of her neck and bosom as the upper part of the half-laced bodice permitted to be visible. 'Even from you, Minna,' she said, 'I will not endure this ! You know that all my life I have spoken the truth, and that I love the truth ; and I tell you that Mordaunt Mertoun never in his life made distinction betwixt you and me, until —'

Here some feeling of consciousness stopped her short, and her sister replied, with a smile, 'Until *when*, Brenda ? Methinks your love of truth seems choked with the sentence you were bringing out.'

'Until you ceased to do him the justice he deserves,' said Brenda, firmly, 'since I must speak out. I have little doubt that he will not long throw away his friendship on you, who hold it so lightly.'

'Be it so,' said Minna ; 'you are secure from my rivalry, either in his love or friendship. But bethink you better, Brenda ; this is no scandal of Cleveland's — Cleveland is incapable of slander — no falsehood of Bryce Snailsfoot ; not one of our friends or acquaintance but says it has been the common talk of the island, that the daughters of Magnus Troil were patiently awaiting the choice of the nameless and birthless stranger, Mordaunt Mertoun. Is it fitting that this should be said of us, the descendants of a Norwegian jarl, and the daughters of the first udaller in Zetland ? or would it be modest or maidenly to submit to it unresented, were we the meanest lasses that ever lifted a milk-pail ?'

'The tongues of fools are no reproach,' replied Brenda,

warmly; 'I will never quit my own thoughts of an innocent friend for the gossip of the island, which can put the worst meaning on the most innocent actions.'

'Hear but what our friends say,' repeated Minna; 'hear but the Lady Glowrowrum; hear but Maddie and Clara Groatsettar.'

'If I were to hear Lady Glowrowrum,' said Brenda, steadily, 'I should listen to the worst tongue in Zetland; and as for Maddie and Clara Groatsettar, they were both blithe enough to get Mordaunt to sit betwixt them at dinner the day before yesterday, as you might have observed yourself, but that your ear was better engaged.'

'Your eyes, at least, have been but indifferently engaged, Brenda,' retorted the elder sister, 'since they were fixed on a young man whom all the world but yourself believes to have talked of us with the most insolent presumption; and even if he be innocently charged, Lady Glowrowrum says it is unmaidenly and bold of you even to look in the direction where he sits, knowing it must confirm such reports.'

'I will look which way I please,' said Brenda, growing still warmer. 'Lady Glowrowrum shall neither rule my thoughts, nor my words, nor my eyes. I hold Mordaunt Mertoun to be innocent—I will look at him as such—I will speak of him as such; and if I did not speak to him also, and behave to him as usual, it is in obedience to my father, and not for what Lady Glowrowrum and all her nieces, had she twenty instead of two, could think, wink, nod, or tattle about the matter that concerns them not.'

'Alas! Brenda,' answered Minna, with calmness, 'this vivacity is more than is required for the defence of the character of a mere friend! Beware! He who ruined Norna's peace for ever was a stranger, admitted to her affections against the will of her family.'

'He was a stranger,' replied Brenda, with emphasis, 'not only in birth but in manners. She had not been bred up with him from her youth; she had not known the gentleness, the frankness of his disposition by an intimacy of many years. He was indeed a stranger, in character, temper, birth, manners, and morals; some wandering adventurer, perhaps, whom chance or tempest had thrown upon the islands, and who knew how to mask a false heart with a frank brow. My good sister, take home your own warning. There are other strangers at Burgh-Westra besides this poor Mordaunt Mertoun.'

Minna seemed for a moment overwhelmed with the rapidity with which her sister retorted her suspicion and her caution. But her natural loftiness of disposition enabled her to reply with assumed composure.

'Were I to treat you, Brenda, with the want of confidence you show towards me, I might reply that Cleveland is no more to me than Mordaunt was; or than young Swaraster, or Lawrence Ericson, or any other favourite guest of my father's, now is. But I scorn to deceive you, or to disguise my thoughts. I love Clement Cleveland.'

'Do not say so, my dearest sister,' said Brenda, abandoning at once the air of acrimony with which the conversation had been latterly conducted, and throwing her arms round her sister's neck, with looks, and with a tone, of the most earnest affection — 'do not say so, I implore you! I will renounce Mordaunt Mertoun, I will swear never to speak to him again; but do not repeat that you love this Cleveland!'

'And why should I not repeat,' said Minna, disengaging herself gently from her sister's grasp, 'a sentiment in which I glory? The boldness, the strength and energy, of his character, to which command is natural and fear unknown — these very properties, which alarm you for my happiness, are the qualities which ensure it. Remember, Brenda, that when your foot loved the calm, smooth sea-beach of the summer sea, mine ever delighted in the summit of the precipice when the waves were in fury.'

'And it is even that which I dread,' said Brenda: 'it is even that adventurous disposition which now is urging you to the brink of a precipice more dangerous than ever was washed by a spring-tide. This man — do not frown, I will say no slander of him — but is he not, even in your own partial judgment, stern and overbearing? accustomed, as you say, to command; but, for that very reason, commanding where he has no right to do so, and leading whom it would most become him to follow? rushing on danger, rather for its own sake than for any other object? And can you think of being yolked with a spirit so unsettled and stormy, whose life has hitherto been led in scenes of death and peril, and who, even while sitting by your side, cannot disguise his impatience again to engage in them? A lover, methinks, should love his mistress better than his own life; but yours, my dear Minna, loves her less than the pleasure of inflicting death on others.'

'And it is even for that I love him,' said Minna. 'I am a

daughter of the old dames of Norway, who could send their lovers to battle with a smile, and slay them with their own hands if they returned with dishonour. My lover must scorn the mockeries by which our degraded race strive for distinction, or must practise them only in sport, and in earnest of nobler dangers. No whale-striking, bird-nesting favourite for me: my lover must be a sea-king, or what else modern times may give that draws near to that lofty character.'

'Alas, my sister!' said Brenda, 'it is now that I must in earnest begin to believe the force of spells and of charms. You remember the Spanish story which you took from me long since, because I said, in your admiration of the chivalry of the olden times of Scandinavia, you rivalled the extravagance of the hero. Ah, Minna, your colour shows that your conscience checks you, and reminds you of the book I mean; is it more wise, think you, to mistake a windmill for a giant, or the commander of a paltry corsair for a kienpe or a viking?'

Minna did indeed colour with anger at this insinuation, of which, perhaps, she felt in some degree the truth.

'You have a right,' she said, 'to insult me, because you are possessed of my secret.'

Brenda's soft heart could not resist this charge of unkindness; she adjured her sister to pardon her, and the natural gentleness of Minna's feelings could not resist her entreaties.

'We are unhappy, she said, as she dried her sister's tears, 'that we cannot see with the same eyes; let us not make each other more so by mutual insult and unkindness. You have my secret; it will not, perhaps, long be one, for my father shall have the confidence to which he is entitled, so soon as certain circumstances will permit me to offer it. Meantime, I repeat, you have my secret, and I more than suspect that I have yours in exchange, though you refuse to own it.'

'How, Minna!' said Brenda; 'would you have me acknowledge for any one such feelings as you allude to, ere he has said the least word that could justify such a confession?'

'Surely not; but a hidden fire may be distinguished by heat as well as flame.'

'You understand these signs, Minna,' said Brenda, hanging down her head, and in vain endeavouring to suppress the temptation to repartee which her sister's remark offered; 'but I can only say that, if ever I love at all, it shall not be un'il I have been asked to do so once or twice at least, which has not yet chanced to me. But do not let us renew our quarrel, and

rather let us think why Norna should have told us that horrible tale, and to what she expects it should lead.'

'It must have been as a caution,' replied Minna — 'a caution which our situation, and, I will not deny it, which mine in particular, might seem to her to call for ; but I am alike strong in my own innocence and in the honour of Cleveland.'

Brenda would fain have replied that she did not confide so absolutely in the latter security as in the first ; but she was prudent, and, forbearing to awake the former painful discussion, only replied, 'It is strange that Norna should have said nothing more of her lover. Surely he could not desert her in the extremity of misery to which he had reduced her ?'

'There may be agonies of distress,' said Minna, after a pause, 'in which the mind is so much jarred that it ceases to be responsive even to the feelings which have most engrossed it : her sorrow for her lover may have been swallowed up in horror and despair.'

'Or he may have fled from the islands in fear of our father's vengeance,' replied Brenda.

'If for fear or faintness of heart,' said Minna, looking upwards, 'he was capable of flying from the ruin which he had occasioned, I trust he has long ere this sustained the punishment which Heaven reserves for the most base and dastardly of traitors and of cowards. Come, sister, we are ere this expected at the breakfast board.'

And they went thither, arm in arm, with much more of confidence than had lately subsisted between them ; the little quarrel which had taken place having served the purpose of a *bourasque*, or sudden squall, which dispels mists and vapours, and leaves fair weather behind it.

On their way to the breakfast apartment, they agreed that it was unnecessary, and might be impudent, to communicate to their father the circumstance of the nocturnal visit, or to let him observe that they now knew more than formerly of the melancholy history of Norna.

CHAPTER XXI

But lost to me, for ever lost those joys,
Which reason scatters, and which time destroys.
No more the midnight fairy-train I view,
All in the merry moonlight tipping dew.
Even the last lingering fiction of the brain,
The churchyard ghost, is now at rest again.

The Library.

THE moral bard,¹ from whom we borrow the motto of this chapter, has touched a theme with which most readers have some feelings that vibrate unconsciously. Superstition, when not arrayed in her full horrors, but laying a gentle hand only on her suppliant's head, had charms which we fail not to regret, even in those stages of society from which her influence is wellnigh banished by the light of reason and general education. At least, in more ignorant periods, her system of ideal terrors had something in them interesting to minds which had few means of excitement. This is more especially true of those lighter modifications of superstitious feelings and practices which mingle in the amusements of the ruder ages, and are, like the auguries of Hallow-e'en in Scotland, considered partly as matter of merriment, partly as sad and prophetic earnest. And, with similar feelings, people even of tolerable education have, in our times, sought the cell of a fortune-teller, upon a frolic, as it is termed, and yet not always in a disposition absolutely sceptical towards the responses they receive.

When the sisters of Burgh-Westra arrived in the apartment destined for a breakfast as ample as that which we have described on the preceding morning, and had undergone a jocular rebuke from the Udaller for their late attendance, they found the company, most of whom had already breakfasted, engaged in an ancient Norwegian custom of the character which we have just described.

It seems to have been borrowed from those poems of the

¹ Rev. George Crabbe (*Laing*).

Scalds in which champions and heroines are so often represented as seeking to know their destiny from some sorceress or prophetess, who, as in the legend called by Gray the *Descent of Odin*, awakens by the force of Runic rhyme the unwilling revealer of the doom of fate, and compels from her answers, often of dubious import, but which were then believed to express some shadow of the events of futurity.

An *ibyl*, Euphane Fea, the housekeeper we have already mentioned was installed in the recess of a large window, studiously darkened by bearskins and other miscellaneous drapery, so as to give it something the appearance of a Laplander's hut, and accommodated, like a confessional chair, with an aperture, which permitted the person within to hear with ease whatever questions should be put, though not to see the querist. Here seated the *ibyl*, was to listen to the rhythmical inquiries which could be made to her, and return an extemporaneous answer. The drapery was supposed to prevent her from seeing by what individuals she was consulted, and the intended or accidental reference which the answer given under such circumstances bore to the situation of the person by whom the question was asked often furnished food for laughter, and sometimes, as it happened, for more serious reflection. The *sibyl* was usually chosen from her possessing the talent of improvisation in the Norse poetry; no unusual accomplishment, where the minds of many were stored with old verses, and where the rules of metrical composition are uncommonly simple. The questions were also put in verse; but as this power of extemporaneous composition, though common, could not be supposed universal, the medium of an interpreter might be used by any querist, which interpreter, holding the consuler of the oracle by the hand, and standing by the place from which the oracles were issued, had the task of rendering into verse the subject of inquiry.¹

On the present occasion, Claud Halcro was summoned, by the universal voice, to perform the part of interpreter; and, after shaking his head and muttering some apology for decay of memory and poetical powers, contradicted at once by his own conscious smile of confidence and by the general shout of the company, the light-hearted old man came forward to play his part in the proposed entertainment.

But, just as it was about to commence, the arrangement of parts was singularly altered. Norna of the Fitful Head, whom

¹ See Fortune-telling Rhymes. Note 26.

every one excepting the two sisters believed to be at the distance of many miles, suddenly, and without greeting, entered the apartment, walked majestically up to the bearskin tabernacle, and signed to the female who was there seated to abdicate her sanctuary. The old woman came forth, shaking her head and looking like one overwhelmed with fear; nor, indeed, were there many in the company who saw with absolute composure the sudden appearance of a person so well known and so generally dreaded as Norna.

She paused a moment at the entrance of the tent; and, as she raised the skin which formed the entrance, she looked up to the north, as if imploring from that quarter a train of inspiration; then signing to the surprised guests that they might approach in succession the shrine in which she was about to install herself, she entered the tent, and was shrouded from their sight.

But this was a different sport from what the company had meditated, and to most of them seemed to present so much more of earnest than of game that there was no alacrity shown to consult the oracle. The character and pretensions of Norna seemed, to almost all present, too serious for the part which she had assumed; the men whispered to each other, and the women, according to Claud Halero, realised the description of glorious John Dryden —

With horror shuddering, on a heap they ran.

The pause was interrupted by the loud, manly voice of the U'daller. 'Why does the game stand still, my masters? Are you afraid because my kinswoman is to play our voluspa? It is kindly done in her, to do for us what none in the isles can do so well; and we will not baulk our sport for it, but rather go on the merrier.'

There was still a pause in the company, and Magnus Troil added, 'It shall never be said that my kinswoman sat in her bower unhalsed, as if she were some of the old mountain giantesses, and all from faint heart. I will speak first myself; but the rhyme comes worse from my tongue than when I was a score of years younger. 'Clau Halero, you must stand by me.'

Hand in hand they approached the shrine of the supposed sibyl, and after a moment's consultation together, Halero thus expressed the query of his friend and patron. Now, the U'daller, like many persons of consequence in Zetland, who, as Sir Robert

Sibbald has testified¹ for them, had begun thus early to apply both to commerce and navigation, was concerned to some extent in the whale-fishery of the season, and the bard had been directed to put into his halting verse an inquiry concerning its success.

CLAUD HALCRO

Mother darksome, mother dread,
Dweller on the Fitful Head,
Thou canst see what deeds are done
Under the never-setting sun.
Look through sleet, and look through frost,
Look to Greenland's caves and coast, —
By the iceberg is a sail
Chasing of the swarthy whale;
Mother doubtful, mother dread,
Tell us, has the good ship sped?

The jest seemed to turn to earnest, as all, bending their heads around, listened to the voice of Norna, who, without a moment's hesitation, answered from the recesses of the tent in which she was inclosed:

NORNA

The thought of the aged is ever on gear, —
On his fishing, his furrow, his flock, and his steer;
But thrive may his fishing, flock, furrow, and herd,
While the aged for anguish shall tear his grey beard.

There was a momentary pause, during which Triptolemus had time to whisper, 'If ten witches and as many warlocks were to swear it, I will never believe that a decent man will either fash his beard or himself about anything so long as stock and crop goes as it should do.'

But the voice from within the tent resumed its low, monotonous tone of recitation, and, interrupting farther commentary, proceeded as follows:

NORNA

The ship, well-laden as bark need be,
Lies deep in the furrow of the Iceland sea;
The breeze from Zetland blows fair and soft,
And gaily the garland is fluttering aloft;
Seven good fishes have spouted their last,
And their jaw-bones are hanging to yard and mast;
Two are for Lerwick, and two for Kirkwall,
And three for Burgh-Westra, the choicest of all.²

¹ *The Description of the Isles of Orkney and Zetland* was published by Sir Robert Sibbald, M.D., Edinburgh, 1711, folio (*Luing*).

² See Whaling Customs. Note 27.

'Now the powers above look down and protect us!' said Bryce Snailsfoot; 'for it is mair than woman's wit that has spaed out that ferly. I saw them at North Ronaldsha that had seen the good bark, the "Olave" of Lerwick, that our worthy patron has such a great share in that she may be called his own in a manner, and they had broomed¹ the ship, and, as sure as there are stars in heaven, she answered them for seven fish, exact as Norna has telled us in her rhyme!'

'Umph — seven fish exactly! and you heard it at North Ronaldsha?' said Captain Cleveland, 'and I suppose told it as a good piece of news when you came hither?'

'It never crossed my tongue, Captain,' answered the pedlar. 'I have kend mony chapmen, travelling-merchants, and such like, neglect their goods to carry clashes and clavers up and down from one countryside to another; but that is no traffic of mine. I dinna believe I have mentioned the "Olave's" having made up her cargo to three folks since I crossed to Dunrossness.'

'But if one of those three had spoken the news over again, and it is two to one that such a thing happened, the old lady prophesies upon velvet.'

Such was the speech of Cleveland, addressed to Magnus Troil, and heard without any applause. The Udaller's respect for his country extended to its superstitions, and so did the interest which he took in his unfortunate kinswoman. If he never rendered a precise assent to her high supernatural pretensions, he was not at least desirous of hearing them disputed by others.

'Norna,' he said, 'his cousin (an emphasis on the word), held no communication with Bryce Snailsfoot or his acquaintances. He did not pretend to explain how she came by her information; but he had always remarked that Scotsmen, and indeed strangers in general, when they came to Zetland, were ready to find reasons for things which remained sufficiently obscure to those whose ancestors had dwelt there for ages.'

Captain Cleveland took the hint, and bowed, without attempting to defend his own scepticism.

'And now forward, my brave hearts,' said the Udaller; 'and may all have as good tidings as I have! Three whales cannot but yield — let me think how many hogsheads —'

There was an obvious reluctance on the part of the guests to be the next in consulting the oracle of the tent.

¹ There is established among whalers a sort of telegraphic signal, in which a certain number of motions, made with a broom, express to any other vessel the number of fish which they have caught.

'Gude news are welcome to some folks, if they came frae the deil himsell,' said Mistress Baby Yellowley, addressing the Lady Glowrowrum — for a similarity of disposition in some respects had made a sort of intimacy betwixt them — 'but I think, my leddy, that this has ower mickle of rank witchcraft in it to have the countenance of douce Christian folks like you and me, my leddy.'

'There may be something in what you say, my dame,' replied the good Lady Glowrowrum; 'but we Hialtlanders are no just like other folks; and this woman, if she be a witch, being the Fowd's friend and near kinswoman, it will be ill ta'en if we haena our fortunes spaed like a' the rest of them; and sae my nieces may e'en step forward in their turn, and nae harm dune. They will hae time to repent, ye ken, in the course of nature, if there be ony thing wrang in it, Mistress Yellowley.'

While others remained under similar uncertainty and apprehension, Halcro, who saw by the knitting of the old Udaller's brows, and by a certain impatient shuffle of his right foot, like the motion of a man who with difficulty refrains from stamping, that his patience began to wax rather thin, gallantly declared that he himself would, in his own person, and not as a procurator for others, put the next query to the pythoness. He paused a minute, collected his rhymes, and thus addressed her:

CLAUD HALCRO

Mother doubtful, mother dread,
Dweller of the Fitful Head,
Thou hast conn'd full many a rhyme,
That lives upon the surge of time:
Tell me, shall my lays be sung,
Like Hacon's of the Golden Tongue,
Long after Halcro's dead and gone?
Or shall Hialtland's minstrel own
One note to rival glorious John?

The voice of the sibyl immediately replied from her sanctuary —

NORNA

The infant loves the rattle's noise;
Age, double childhood, hath its toys;
But different far the descant rings,
As strikes a different hand the stringa.
The eagle mounts the polar sky;
The imber-goose, unskill'd to fly,
Must be content to glide along,
Where seal and sea-dog list his song.

Halcro bit his lip, shrugged his shoulders, and then, instantly recovering his good-humour and the ready, though slovenly, power of extemporaneous composition, with which long habit had invested him, he gallantly rejoined —

CLAUD HALCRO

Be mine the imber-goose to play,
And haunt lone cave and silent bay;
The archer's aim so shall I shun,
So shall I 'scape the levell'd gun,
Content my verse's tuneless jingle,
With Thule's sounding tides to mingle,
While, to the ear of wondering wight,
Upon the distant headland's height,
Softened by murmur of the sea,
The rude sounds seem like harmony!

As the little bard stepped back, with an alert gait and satisfied air, general applause followed the spirited manner in which he had acquiesced in the doom which levelled him with an imber-goose. But his resigned and courageous submission did not even yet encourage any other person to consult the redoubted Norna.

'The coward fools!' said the Udaller. 'Are you, too, afraid, Captain Cleveland, to speak to an old woman? Ask her anything — ask her whether the twelve-gun sloop at Kirkwall be your consort or no.'

Cleveland looked at Minna, and probably conceiving that she watched with anxiety his answer to her father's question, he collected himself, after a moment's hesitation.

'I never was afraid of man or woman. Master Halcro, you have heard the question which our host desires me to ask; put it in my name, and in your own way. I pretend to as little skill in poetry as I do in witchcraft.'

Halcro did not wait to be invited twice, but, grasping Captain Cleveland's hand in his, according to the form which the game prescribed, he put the query which the Udaller had dictated to the stranger, in the following words: —

CLAUD HALCRO

Mother doubtful, mother dread,
Dweller of the Fitful Head,
A gallant bark from far abroad,
St. Magnus hath her in his road,
With guns and firelocks not a few,
A silken and a scarlet crew,

Deep stored with precious merchandise,
Of gold and goods of rare device —
What interest hath our comrade bold
In bark and crew, in goods and gold ?

There was a pause of unusual duration ere the oracle would return any answer ; and when she replied, it was in a lower, though an equally decided, tone with that which she had hitherto employed :

NORNA

Gold is ruddy, fair, and free,
Blood is crimson and dark to see ; —
I look'd out on St. Magnus Bay,
And I saw a falcon that struck her prey :
A gobbet of flesh in her beak she bore,
And talons and singles are dripping with gore ;
Let him that asks after them look on his hand,
And if there is blood on 't, he 's one of their band.

Cleveland smiled scornfully, and held out his hand. 'Few men have been on the Spanish Main as often as I have without having had to do with the *guarda-costas* once and again ; but there never was aught like a stain on my hand that a wet towel would not wipe away.'

The Udaller added his voice potential — 'There is never peace with Spaniards beyond the line : I have heard Captain Tragendeck and honest old Commodore Rummelaer say so a hundred times, and they have both been down in the Bay of Honduras, and all thereabouts. I hate all Spaniards, since they came here and reft the Fair Isle men of their vivers in 1588.¹ I have heard my grandfather speak of it ; and there is an old Dutch history somewhere about the house, that shows what work they made in the Low Countries long since. There is neither mercy nor faith in them.'

'True — true, my old friend,' said Cleveland : 'they are as jealous of their Indian possessions as an old man of his young bride ; and if they can catch you at disadvantage, the mines for your life is the word ; and so we fight them with our colours nailed to the mast.'

'That is the way,' shouted the Udaller : 'the old British jack should never down ! When I think of the wooden walls, I almost think myself an Englishman, only it would be becoming too like my Scottish neighbours ; but come, no offence to any here, gentlemen — all are friends, and all are welcome. Come, Brenda, go on with the play : do you speak next, you have Norse rhymes enough, we all know.'

¹ See Armada in Zetland. Note 28.

'But none that suit the game we play at, father,' said Brenda, drawing back.

'Nonsense!' said her father, pushing her onward, while Halcro seized on her reluctant hand; 'never let mistimed modesty mar honest mirth. Speak for Brenda, Halcro; it is your trade to interpret maidens' thoughts.'

The poet bowed to the beautiful young woman, with the devotion of a poet and the gallantry of a traveller, and having, in a whisper, reminded her that she was in no way responsible for the nonsense he was about to speak, he paused, looked upward, simpered as if he had caught a sudden idea, and at length set off in the following verses: —

CLAUD HALCRO

Mother doubtful, mother dread,
Dweller of the Fitful Head,
Well thou know'st it is thy task
To tell what beauty will not ask.
Then steep thy words in wine and milk,
And weave a doom of gold and silk;
For we would know, shall Brenda prove
In love, and happy in her love?

The prophetess replied almost immediately from behind her curtain:

NORNA

Untouch'd by love, the maiden's breast
Is like the snow on Rona's crest,
High seated in the middle sky
In bright and barren purity;
But by the sunbeam gently kiss'd,
Scarce by the gazing eye 't is miss'd,
Ere down the lonely valley stealing,
Fresh grass and growth its course revealing,
It cheers the flock, revives the flower,
And decks some happy shepherd's bower.

'A comfortable doctrine, and most justly spoken,' said the Udaller, seizing the blushing Brenda, as she was endeavouring to escape. 'Never think shame for the matter, my girl. To be the mistress of some honest man's house, and the means of maintaining some old Norse name, making neighbours happy, the poor easy, and relieving strangers, is the most creditable lot a young woman can look to, and I heartily wish it to all here. Come, who speaks next? Good husbands are going — Maddie Groatsettar — my pretty Clara, come and have your share.'

The Lady Glowrowrum shook her head, and 'could not,' she said, 'altogether approve——'

'Enough said—enough said,' replied Magnus; 'no compulsion; but the play shall go on till we are tired of it. Here, Minna, I have got you at command. Stand forth, my girl; there are plenty of things to be ashamed of besides old-fashioned and innocent pleasantries. Come, I will speak for you myself, though I am not sure I can remember rhyme enough for it.'

There was a slight colour which passed rapidly over Minna's face, but she instantly regained her composure, and stood erect by her father, as one superior to any little jest to which her situation might give rise.

Her father, after some rubbing of his brow and other mechanical efforts to assist his memory, at length recovered verse sufficient to put the following query, though in less gallant strains than those of Halcro:—

MAGNUS TROIL

Mother, speak, and do not tarry,
Here's a maiden fain would marry.
Shall she marry, ay or not?
If she marry, what's her lot?

A deep sigh was uttered within the tabernacle of the sooth-sayer, as if she compassionated the subject of the doom which she was obliged to pronounce. She then, as usual, returned her response:

NORNA

Untouch'd by love, the maiden's breast
Is like the snow on Rona's crest;
So pure, so free from earthly dye,
It seems, whilst leaning on the sky,
Part of the heaven to which 't is nigh;
But passion, like the wild March rain,
May soil the wreath with many a stain.
We gaze—the lovely vision's gone—
A torrent fills the bed of stone,
That, hurrying to destruction's shock,
Leaps headlong from the lofty rock.

The Udaller heard this reply with high resentment. 'By the bones of the Martyr,' he said, his brave visage becoming suddenly ruddy, 'this is an abuse of courtesy! and, were it any but yourself that had classed my daughter's name and the word "destruction" together, they had better have left the word

unspoken. But come forth of the tent, thou old galdragon,¹ he added, with a smile, 'I should have known that thou canst not long joy in anything that smacks of mirth, God help thee!' His summons received no answer; and, after waiting a moment, he again addressed her — 'Nay, never be sullen with me, kinswoman, though I did speak a hasty word; thou knowest I bear malice to no one, least of all to thee; so come forth, and let us shake hands. Thou mightst have foretold the wreck of my ship and boats, or a bad herring-fishery, and I should have said never a word; but Minna or Brenda, you know, are things which touch me nearer. But come out, shake hands, and there let there be an end on 't.'

Norna returned no answer whatever to his repeated invocations, and the company began to look upon each other with some surprise, when the Udaller, raising the skin which covered the entrance of the tent, discovered that the interior was empty. The wonder was now general, and not unmixed with fear; for it seemed impossible that Norna could have, in any manner, escaped from the tabernacle in which she was inclosed, without having been discovered by the company. Gone, however, she was, and the Udaller, after a moment's consideration, dropt the skin-curtain again over the entrance of the tent.

'My friends,' he said, with a cheerful countenance, 'we have long known my kinswoman, and that her ways are not like those of the ordinary folks of this world. But she means well by Hialtland, and hath the love of a sister for me and for my house; and no guest of mine needs either to fear evil or to take offence at her hand. I have little doubt she will be with us at dinner-time.'

'Now, Heaven forbid!' said Mrs. Baby Yellowley; 'for, my gude Leddy Glowrowrum, to tell your leddyship the truth, I likena cummers that can come and gae like a glance of the sun or the whisk of a whirlwind.'

'Speak lower — speak lower,' said the Lady Glowrowrum, 'and be thankful that yon carlin hasna ta'en the house-side away wi' her. The like of her have played warse pranks, and so has she hersell, unless she is the sairer lied on.'

Similar murmurs ran through the rest of the company, until the Udaller uplifted his stentorian and imperative voice to put them to silence, and invited, or rather commanded, the attendance of his guests to behold the boats set off for the haaf or deep-sea fishing.

¹ *Galdra Kinna* — the Norse for a sorceress.

'The wind has been high since sunrise,' he said, 'and had kept the boats in the bay ; but now it was favourable, and they would sail immediately.'

This sudden alteration of the weather occasioned sundry nods and winks amongst the guests, who were not indisposed to connect it with Nerna's sudden disappearance ; but without giving vent to observations which could not but be disagreeable to their host, they followed his stately step to the shore, as the herd of deer follows the leading stag, with all manner of respectful observance.

CHAPTER XXII

There was a laughing devil in his sneer,
That raised emotions both of rage and fear ;
And where his frown of hatred darkly fell,
Hope withering fled, and Mercy sigh'd farewell.

The Corsair, Canto I.

THE ling or white fishery is the principal employment of the natives of Zetland, and was formerly that upon which the gentry chiefly depended for their income, and the poor for their subsistence. The fishing-season is therefore, like the harvest of an agricultural country, the busiest and most important, as well as the most animating, period of the year.

The fishermen of each district assemble at particular stations, with their boats and crews, and erect upon the shore small huts, composed of shingle and covered with turf, for their temporary lodging, and skeos, or drying-houses, for the fish ; so that the lonely beach at once assumes the appearance of an Indian town. The banks to which they repair for the haaf fishing are often many miles distant from the station where the fish is dried ; so that they are always twenty or thirty hours absent, frequently longer ; and under unfavourable circumstances of wind and tide, they remain at sea, with a very small stock of provisions, and in a boat of a construction which seems extremely slender, for two or three days, and are sometimes heard of no more. The departure of the fishers, therefore, on this occupation has in it a character of danger and of suffering which renders it dignified, and the anxiety of the females who remain on the beach, watching the departure of the lessening boat, or anxiously looking out for its return, gives pathos to the scene.¹

The scene, therefore, was in busy and anxious animation when the Udaller and his friends appeared on the beach. The various crews of about thirty boats, amounting each to from three to five or six men, were taking leave of their wives and

¹ See Fishermen's Wives. Note 29.

female relatives, and jumping on board their long Norway skiffs, where their lines and tackle lay ready stowed. Magnus was not an idle spectator of the scene : he went from one place to another, inquiring into the state of their provisions for the voyage, and their preparations for the fishing ; now and then, with a rough Dutch or Norse oath, abusing them for block-heads for going to sea with their boats indifferently found, but always ending by ordering from his own stores a gallon of gin, a lispund of meal, or some similar essential addition to their sea-stores. The hardy sailors, on receiving such favours, expressed their thanks in the brief, gruff manner which their landlord best approved ; but the women were more clamorous in their gratitude, which Magnus was often obliged to silence by cursing all female tongues from Eve's downwards.

At length all were on board and ready, the sails were hoisted, the signal for departure given, the rowers began to pull, and all started from the shore, in strong emulation to get first to the fishing-ground, and to have their lines set before the rest — an exploit to which no little consequence was attached by the boat's crew who should be happy enough to perform it.

While they were yet within hearing of the shore, they chanted an ancient Norse ditty appropriate to the occasion, of which Claud Halcro had executed the following literal translation : —

' Farewell, merry maidens, to song and to laugh,
For the brave lads of Westra are bound to the haaf ;
And we must have labour, and hunger, and pain,
Ere we dance with the maids of Dunrossness again.

For now, in our trim boats of Norroway deal,
We must dance on the waves, with the porpoise and seal ;
The breeze it shall pipe, so it pipe not too high,
And the gull be our songstress when e'er she flits by.

Sing on, my brave bird, while we follow, like thee,
By bank, shoal, and quicksand, the swarms of the sea ;
And when twenty score fishes are straining our line,
Sing louder, brave bird, for their spoils shall be thine.

We 'll sing while we bait, and we 'll sing when we haul,
For the deeps of the haaf have enough for us all :
There is torsk for the gentle, and skate for the carle,
And there 's wealth for bold Magnus, the son of the earl.

Huzza ! my brave comrades, give way for the haaf,
We shall sooner come back to the dance and the laugh ;
For life without mirth is a lamp without oil ;
Then, mirth and long life to the bold Magnus Troil !'

The rude words of the song were soon drowned in the ripple of the waves, but the tune continued long to mingle with the sound of wind and sea, and the boats were like so many black specks on the surface of the ocean, diminishing by degrees as they bore far and farther seaward ; while the ear could distinguish touches of the human voice, almost drowned amid that of the elements.

The fishermen's wives looked their last after the parting sails, and were now departing slowly, with downcast and anxious looks, towards the huts in which they were to make arrangements for preparing and drying the fish, with which they hoped to see their husbands and friends return deeply laden. Here and there an old sibyl displayed the superior importance of her experience by predicting, from the appearance of the atmosphere, that the wind would be fair or foul, while others recommended a vow to the kirk of St. Ninian's for the safety of their men and boats (an ancient Catholic superstition not yet wholly abolished), and others, but in a low and timorous tone, regretted to their companions that Norna of Fitful Head had been suffered to depart in discontent that morning from Burgh-Westra, 'and, of all days in the year, that they suld have contrived to give her displeasure on the first day of the white fishing !'

The gentry, guests of Magnus Troil, having whiled away as much time as could be so disposed of in viewing the little armament set sail, and in conversing with the poor women who had seen their friends embark in it, began now to separate into various groups and parties, which strolled in different directions, as fancy led them, to enjoy what may be called the clair-obscur of a Zetland summer day, which, though without the brilliant sunshine that cheers other countries during the fine season, has a mild and pleasing character of its own, that softens while it saddens landscapes which, in their own lonely, bare, and monotonous tone, have something in them stern as well as barren.

In one of the loneliest recesses of the coast, where a deep indenture of the rocks gave the tide access to the cavern, or, as it is called, the helyer, of Swartaster, Minna Troil was walking with Captain Cleveland. They had probably chosen that walk as being little liable to interruption from others ; for, as the force of the tide rendered the place unfit either for fishing or sailing, so it was not the ordinary resort of walkers, on account of its being the supposed habitation of a mermaid, a race which Norwegian superstition invests with magical as well as mis-

chievous qualities. Here, therefore, Minna wandered with her lover.

A small spot of milk-white sand, that stretched beneath one of the precipices which wailed in the creek on either side, afforded them space for a dry, firm, and pleasant walk of about a hundred yards, terminated at one extremity by a dark stretch of the bay, which, scarce touched by the wind, seemed almost as smooth as glass, and which was seen from between two lofty rocks, the jaws of the creek, or indenture, that approached each other above, as if they wished to meet over the dark tide that separated them. The other end of their promenade was closed by a lofty and almost unscalable precipice, the abode of hundreds of sea-fowl of different kinds, in the bottom of which the huge helyer, or sea-cave, itself yawned, as if for the purpose of swallowing up the advancing tide, which it seemed to receive into an abyss of immeasurable depth and extent. The entrance to this dismal cavern consisted not in a single arch, as usual, but was divided into two, by a huge pillar of natural rock, which, rising out of the sea, and extending to the top of the cavern, seemed to lend its support to the roof, and thus formed a double portal to the helyer, on which the fishermen and peasants had bestowed the rude name of the Devil's Nostrils. In this wild scene, lonely and undisturbed but by the clang of the sea fowl, Cleveland had already met with Minna Troil more than once; for with her it was a favourite walk, as the objects which it presented agreed peculiarly with the love of the wild, the melancholy, and the wonderful. But now the conversation in which she was earnestly engaged was such as entirely to withdraw her attention, as well as that of her companion, from the scenery around them.

'You cannot deny it,' she said, 'you have given way to feelings respecting this young man which indicate prejudice and violence — the prejudice unmerited, as far as you are concerned at least, and the violence equally imprudent and unjustifiable.'

'I should have thought,' replied Cleveland, 'that the service I rendered him yesterday might have freed me from such a charge. I do not talk of my own risk, for I have lived in danger, and love it; it is not every one, however, would have ventured so near the furious animal to save one with whom they had no connexion.'

'It is not every one, indeed, who could have saved him,' answered Minna, gravely; 'but every one who has courage and generosity would have attempted it. The giddy-brained Claud

Halero would have done as much as you had his strength been equal to his courage; my father would have done as much, though having such just cause of resentment against the young man, for his vain and braggart abuse of our hospitality. Do not, therefore, boast of your exploit too much, my good friend, lest you should make me think that it required too great an effort. I know you love not Mordaunt Mertoun, though you exposed your own life to save his.

'Will you allow nothing, then,' said Cleveland, 'for the long misery I was made to endure from the common and prevailing report that this beardless bird-hunter stood betwixt me and what I on earth coveted most — the affections of Minna Troil?'

He spoke in a tone at once impassioned and insinuating, and his whole language and manner seemed to express a grace and elegance which formed the most striking contrast with the speech and gesture of the unpolished seaman which he usually affected or exhibited. But his apology was unsatisfactory to Minna.

'You have known,' she said, 'perhaps too soon and too well, how little you had to fear — if you indeed feared — that Mertoun or any other had interest with Minna Troil. Nay, truce to thanks and protestations; I would accept it as the best proof of gratitude that you would be reconciled with this youth, or at least avoid every quarrel with him.'

'That we should be friends, Minna, is impossible,' replied Cleveland; 'even the love I bear you, the most powerful emotion that my heart ever knew, cannot work that miracle.'

'And why, I pray you?' said Minna; 'there have been no evil offices between you, but rather an exchange of mutual services; why can you not be friends? I have many reasons to wish it.'

'And can you, then, forget the slights which he has cast upon Brenda, and on yourself, and on your father's house?'

'I can forgive them all,' said Minna; 'can you not say so much, who have in truth received no offence?'

Cleveland looked down and paused for an instant; then raised his head and replied, 'I might easily deceive you, Minna, and promise you what my soul tells me is an impossibility; but I am forced to use too much deceit with others, and with you I will use none. I cannot be friend to this young man: there is a natural dislike — an instinctive aversion — something like a principle of repulsion, in our mutual nature, which makes us odious to each other. Ask himself — he will tell you he has

the same antipathy against me. The obligation he conferred on me was a bridle to my resentment; but I was so galled by the restraint that I could have gnawed the curb till my lips were bloody.'

'You have worn what you are wont to call your iron mask so long that your features,' replied Minna, 'retain the impressions of its rigidity even when it is removed.'

'You do me injustice, Minna,' replied her lover, 'and you are angry with me because I deal with you plainly and honestly. Plainly and honestly, however, will I say, that I cannot be Mertoun's friend, but it shall be his own fault, not mine, if I am ever his enemy. I seek not to injure him; but do not ask me to love him. And of this remain satisfied, that it would be vain even if I could do so; for as sure as I attempted any advances towards his confidence, so sure would I be to awaken his disgust and suspicion. Leave us to the exercise of our natural feelings, which, as they will unquestionably keep us as far separate as possible, are most likely to prevent any possible interference with each other. Does this satisfy you?'

'It must,' said Minna, 'since you tell me there is no remedy. And now tell me why you looked so grave when you heard of your consort's arrival—for that it is she I have no doubt—in the port of Kirkwall?'

'I fear,' replied Cleveland, 'the consequences of that vessel's arrival with her crew, as comprehending the ruin of my fondest hopes. I had made some progress in your father's favour, and, with time, might have made more, when hither come Hawkins and the rest to blight my prospects for ever. I told you on what terms we parted. I then commanded a vessel braver and better found than their own, with a crew who, at my slightest nod, would have faced fiends armed with their own fiery element; but I now stand alone, a single man, destitute of all means to overawe or to restrain them; and they will soon show so plainly the ungovernable license of their habits and dispositions, that ruin to themselves and to me will in all probability be the consequence.'

'Do not fear it,' said Minna; 'my father can never be so unjust as to hold you liable for the offences of others.'

'But what will Magnus Troil say to my own demerits, fair Minna?' said Cleveland, smiling.

'My father is a Zetlander, or rather a Norwegian,' said Minna, 'one of an oppressed race, who will not care whether you fought against the Spaniards, who are the tyrants of the

New World, or against the Dutch and English, who have succeeded to their usurped dominions. His own ancestors supported and exercised the freedom of the seas in those gallant barks whose pennons were the dread of all Europe.'

'I fear, nevertheless,' said Cleveland, 'that the descendant of an ancient sea-king will scarce acknowledge a fitting acquaintance in a modern rover. I have not disguised from you that I have reason to dread the English laws; and Magnus, though a great enemy to taxes, imposts, scat, wattle, and so forth, has no idea of latitude upon points of a more general character: he would willingly reeve a rope to the yard-arm for the benefit of an unfortunate buccanier.'

'Do not suppose so,' said Minna; 'he himself suffers too much oppression from the tyrannical laws of our proud neighbours of Scotland. I trust he will soon be able to rise in resistance against them. The enemy—such I will call them—are now divided amongst themselves, and every vessel from their coast brings intelligence of fresh commotions—the Highlands against the Lowlands, the Williamites against the Jacobites, the Whigs against the Tories, and, to sum the whole, the kingdom of England against that of Scotland. What is there, as Claud Halcro well hinted, to prevent our availing ourselves of the quarrels of these robbers to assert the independence of which we are deprived?'

'To hoist the raven standard on the Castle of Scalloway,' said Cleveland, in imitation of her tone and manner, 'and proclaim your father Earl Magnus the First!'

'Earl Magnus the Seventh, if it please you,' answered Minna; 'for six of his ancestors have worn, or were entitled to wear, the coronet before him. You laugh at my ardour, but what is there to prevent all this?'

'Nothing *will* prevent it,' replied Cleveland, 'because it will never be attempted. Anything *might* prevent it that is equal in strength to the long-boat of a British man-of-war.'

'You treat us with scorn, sir,' said Minna; 'yet yourself should know what a few resolved men may perform.'

'But they must be armed, Minna,' replied Cleveland, 'and willing to place their lives upon each desperate adventure. Think not of such visions. Denmark has been cut down into a second-rate kingdom, incapable of exchanging a single broadside with England; Norway is a starving wilderness; and, in these islands, the love of independence has been suppressed by a long term of subjection, or shows itself but in a few muttered

growls over the bowl and bottle. And, were your men as willing warriors as their ancestors, what could the unarmed crews of a few fishing-boats do against the British navy? Think no more of it, sweet Minna; it is a dream, and I must term it so, though it makes your eye so bright and your step so noble.'

'It is indeed a dream!' said Minna, looking down, 'and it ill becomes a daughter of Hialtland to look or to move like a freewoman. Our eye should be on the ground, and our step slow and reluctant, as that of one who obeys a taskmaster.'

'There are lands,' said Cleveland, 'in which the eye may look bright upon groves of the palm and the cocoa, and where the foot may move light as a galley under sail, over fields carpeted with flowers, and savannahs surrounded by aromatic thickets, and where subjection is unknown, except that of the brave to the bravest, and of all to the most beautiful.'

Minna paused a moment ere she spoke, and then answered, 'No, Cleveland. My own rude country has charms for me, even desolate as you think it, and depressed as it surely is, which no other land on earth can offer to me. I endeavour in vain to represent to myself those visions of trees and of groves which my eye never saw; but my imagination can conceive no sight in nature more sublime than these waves when agitated by a storm, or more beautiful than when they come, as they now do, rolling in calm tranquillity to the shore. Not the fairest scene in a foreign land, not the brightest sunbeam that ever shone upon the richest landscape, would win my thoughts for a moment from that lofty rock, misty hill, and wide-rolling ocean. Hialtland is the land of my deceased ancestors and of my living father; and in Hialtland will I live and die.'

'Then in Hialtland,' answered Cleveland, 'will I too live and die. I will not go to Kirkwall: I will not make my existence known to my comrades, from whom it were else hard for me to escape. Your father loves me, Minna; who knows whether long attention, anxious care, might not bring him to receive me into his family? Who would regard the length of a voyage that was certain to terminate in happiness?'

'Dream not of such an issue,' said Minna; 'it is impossible. While you live in my father's house, while you receive his assistance and share his table, you will find him the generous friend and the hearty host; but touch him on what concerns his name and family, and the frank-hearted Udaller will start up before you the haughty and proud descendant of a Norwegian jarl. See you—a moment's suspicion has fallen on

Mordaunt Mertoun, and he has banished from his favour the youth whom he so lately loved as a son. No one must ally with his house that is not of untainted Northern descent.'

'And mine may be so for aught that is known to me upon the subject,' said Cleveland.

'How!' said Minna; 'have you any reason to believe yourself of Norse descent?'

'I have told you before,' replied Cleveland, 'that my family is totally unknown to me. I spent my earliest days upon a solitary plantation in the little island of Tortuga, under the charge of my father, then a different person from what he afterwards became. We were plundered by the Spaniards, and reduced to such extremity of poverty that my father, in desperation and in thirst of revenge, took up arms, and having become a chief of a little band who were in the same circumstances, became a buccanier, as it is called, and cruised against Spain, with various vicissitudes of good and bad fortune, until, while he interfered to check some violence of his companions, he fell by their hands - no uncommon fate among the captains of these rovers. But whence my father came, or what was the place of his birth, I know not, fair Minna, nor have I ever had a curious thought on the subject.'

'He was a Briton, at least, your unfortunate father?' said Minna.

'I have no doubt of it,' said Cleveland; 'his name, which I have rendered too formidable to be openly spoken, is an English one; and his acquaintance with the English language, and even with English literature, together with the pains which he took, in better days, to teach me both, plainly spoke him to be an Englishman. If the rude bearing which I display towards others is not the genuine character of my mind and manners, it is to my father, Minna, that I owe any share of better thoughts and principles, which may render me worthy, in some small degree, of your notice and approbation. And yet it sometimes seems to me that I have two different characters; for I cannot bring myself to believe that I, who now walk this lone beach with the lovely Minna Troil, and am permitted to speak to her of the passion which I have cherished, have ever been the daring leader of the bold band whose name was as terrible as a tornado.'

'You had not been permitted,' said Minna, 'to use that bold language towards the daughter of Magnus Troil had you *not* been the brave and undaunted leader who, with so small means,

has made his name so formidable. My heart is like that of a maiden of the ancient days, and is to be won not by fair words but by gallant deeds.'

'Alas! that heart,' said Cleveland; 'and what is it that I may do — what is it that man can do, to win in it the interest which I desire?'

'Rejoin your friends — pursue your fortunes — leave the rest to destiny,' said Minna. 'Should you return the leader of a gallant fleet, who can tell what may befall?'

'And what shall assure me that, when I return — if return I ever shall — I may not find Minna Troil a bride or a spouse? No, Minna, I will not trust to destiny the only object worth attaining which my stormy voyage in life has yet offered me.'

'Hear me,' said Minna. 'I will bind myself to you, if you dare accept such an engagement, by the promise of Odin,¹ the most sacred of our Northern rites which are yet practised among us, that I will never favour another until you resign the pretensions which I have given to you. Will that satisfy you? for more I cannot, more I will not give.'

'Then with that,' said Cleveland, after a moment's pause, 'I must perforce be satisfied; but remember, it is yourself that throw me back upon a mode of life which the laws of Britain denounce as criminal, and which the violent passions of the daring men by whom it is pursued have rendered infamous.'

'But I,' said Minna, 'am superior to such prejudices. In warring with England, I see their laws in no other light than as if you were engaged with an enemy who, in fulness of pride and power, has declared he will give his antagonist no quarter. A brave man will not fight the worse for this; and, for the manners of your comrades, so that they do not infect your own, why should their evil report attach to you?'

Cleveland gazed on her as she spoke with a degree of wondering admiration, in which, at the same time, there lurked a smile at her simplicity.

'I could not,' he said, 'have believed that such high courage could have been found united with such ignorance of the world, as the world is now wielded. For my manners, they who best know me will readily allow that I have done my best, at the risk of my popularity and of my life itself, to mitigate the ferocity of my mates; but how can you teach humanity to men burning with vengeance against the world by whom they are proscribed, or teach them temperance and moderation in enjoy

¹ See Note 30.

ing the pleasures which chance throws in their way, to vary a life which would be otherwise one constant scene of peril and hardship? But this promise, Minna — this promise, which is all I am to receive in guerdon for my faithful attachment — let me at least lose no time in claiming that.

'It must not be rendered here, but in Kirkwall. We must invoke, to witness the engagement, the spirit which presides over the ancient Circle of Stennis. But perhaps you fear to name the ancient Father of the Slain too, the Severe, the the Terrible?'

Cleveland smiled.

'Do me the justice to think, lovely Minna, that I am little subject to fear real causes of terror; and for those which are visionary I have no sympathy whatever.'

'You believe not in them, then?' said Minna, 'and are so far better suited to be Brenda's lover than mine.'

'I will believe,' replied Cleveland, 'in whatever you believe. The whole inhabitants of that Valhalla about which you converse so much with that fiddling, rhyming fool, Claud Halero — all these shall become living and existing things to my credulity. But, Minna, do not ask me to fear any of them.'

'Fear! no — not to *fear* them, surely,' replied the maiden; 'for, not before Thor or Odin, when they approached in the fulness of their terrors, did the heroes of my dauntless race yield one foot in retreat. Nor do I own them as deities; a better faith prevents so foul an error. But, in our own conception, they are powerful spirits for good or evil. And when you boast not to fear them, bethink you that you defy an enemy of a kind you have never yet encountered.'

'Not in these northern latitudes,' said the lover, with a smile, 'where hitherto I have seen but angels; but I have faced, in my time, the demons of the equinoctial line, which we rovers suppose to be as powerful and as malignant as those of the North.'

'Have you, then, witnessed those wonders that are beyond the visible world?' said Minna, with some degree of awe.

Cleveland composed his countenance, and replied — 'A short while before my father's death, I came, though then very young, into the command of a sloop, manned with thirty as desperate fellows as ever handled a musket. We cruised for a long while with bad success, taking nothing but wretched small craft, which were destined to catch turtle, or otherwise loaded with coarse and worthless trumpery. I had much ado to prevent my comrades from avenging upon the crews of those baubling

shallops the disappointment which they had occasioned to us. At length we grew desperate, and made a descent on a village where we were told we should intercept the mules of a certain Spanish governor, laden with treasure. We succeeded in carrying the place; but while I endeavoured to save the inhabitants from the fury of my followers, the muleteers, with their precious cargo, escaped into the neighbouring woods. This filled up the measure of my unpopularity. My people, who had been long discontented, became openly mutinous. I was deposed from my command in solemn council, and condemned, as having too little luck and too much humanity for the profession I had undertaken, to be marooned,¹ as the phrase goes, on one of those little sandy, bushy islets which are called, in the West Indies, keys, and which are frequented only by turtle and by sea-fowl. Many of them are supposed to be haunted — some by the demons worshipped by the old inhabitants; some by caciques and others, whom the Spaniards had put to death by torture, to compel them to discover their hidden treasures; and others by the various spectres in which sailors of all nations have implicit faith. My place of banishment, called Coffin Key,² about two leagues and a half to the south-east of Bermudas, was so infamous as the resort of these supernatural inhabitants that I believe the wealth of Mexico would not have persuaded the bravest of the scoundrels who put me ashore there to have spent an hour on the islet alone, even in broad daylight; and when they rowed off, they pulled for the sloop like men that dared not cast their eyes behind them. And there they left me, to subsist as I might on a speck of unproductive sand, surrounded by the boundless Atlantic, and haunted, as they supposed, by malignant demons.

‘And what was the consequence?’ said Minna, eagerly.

‘I supported life,’ said the adventurer, ‘at the expense of such sea-fowl, aptly called boobies, as were silly enough to let me approach so near as to knock them down with a stick; and by means of turtle-eggs, when these complaisant birds became better acquainted with the mischievous disposition of the human species, and more shy of course of my advances.’

‘And the demons of whom you spoke?’ continued Minna.

‘I had my secret apprehensions upon their account,’ said Cleveland. ‘In open daylight, or in absolute darkness, I did not greatly apprehend their approach; but in the misty dawn

¹ To maroon a seaman signified to abandon on a desolate coast or island — a piece of cruelty often practised by pirates and buccaniers.

² See Note 31.

of the morning, or when evening was about to fall, I saw, for the first week of my abode on the key, many a dim and undefined spectre, now resembling a Spaniard, with his *capa* wrapped around him, and his huge *sombrero*, as large as an umbrella, upon his head; now a Dutch sailor, with his rough cap and trunk-hose; and now an Indian cacique, with his feathery crown and long lance of cane.'

'Did you not approach and address them?' said Minna.

'I always approached them,' replied the seaman; 'but — I grieve to disappoint your expectations, my fair friend — whenever I drew near them, the phantom changed into a bush, or a piece of driftwood, or a wreath of mist, or some such cause of deception, until at last I was taught by experience to cheat myself no longer with such visions, and continued a solitary inhabitant of Coffin Key, as little alarmed by visionary terrors as I ever was in the great cabin of a stout vessel, with a score of companions around me.'

'You have cheated me into listening to a tale of nothing,' said Minna; 'but how long did you continue on the island?'

'Four weeks of wretched existence,' said Cleveland, 'when I was relieved by the crew of a vessel which came thither a-turtling. Yet my miserable seclusion was not entirely useless to me; for on that spot of barren sand I found, or rather forged, the iron mask which has since been my chief security against treason or mutiny of my followers. It was there I formed the resolution to seem no softer-hearted nor better-instructed, no more humane and no more scrupulous, than those with whom fortune had leagued me. I thought over my former story, and saw that seeming more brave, skilful, and enterprising than others had gained me command and respect, and that seeming more gently nurtured and more civilised than they had made them envy and hate me as a being of another species. I bargained with myself then, that, since I could not lay aside my superiority of intellect and education, I would do my best to disguise, and to sink in the rude seaman, all appearance of better feeling and better accomplishments. I foresaw then what has since happened, that, under the appearance of daring obduracy, I should acquire such a habitual command over my followers that I might use it for the insurance of discipline, and for relieving the distresses of the wretches who fell under our power. I saw, in short, that to attain authority I must assume the external semblance, at least, of those over whom it was to be exercised. The tidings of my father's fate, while it excited me to wrath and

to revenge, confirmed the resolution I had adopted. He also had fallen a victim to his superiority of mind, morals, and manners above those whom he commanded. They were wont to call him the Gentleman; and, unquestionably, they thought he waited some favourable opportunity to reconcile himself, perhaps at their expense, to those existing forms of society his habits seemed best to suit with, and, even therefore, they murdered him. Nature and justice alike called on me for revenge. I was soon at the head of a new body of adventurers who are so numerous in those islands. I sought not after those by whom I had been myself marooned, but after the wretches who had betrayed my father; and on them I took a revenge so severe that it was of itself sufficient to stamp me with the character of that inexorable ferocity which I was desirous to be thought to possess, and which, perhaps, was gradually creeping on my natural disposition in actual earnest. My manner, speech, and conduct seemed so totally changed that those who formerly knew me were disposed to ascribe the alteration to my intercourse with the demons who haunted the sands of Coffin Key; nay, there were some superstitious enough to believe that I had actually formed a league with them.

'I tremble to hear the rest!' said Minna; 'did you not become the monster of courage and cruelty whose character you assumed?'

'If I have escaped being so, it is to you, Minna,' replied Cleveland, 'that the wonder must be ascribed. It is true, I have always endeavoured to distinguish myself rather by acts of adventurous valour than by schemes of revenge or of plunder, and that at length I could save lives by a rude jest, and sometimes, by the excess of the measures which I myself proposed, could induce those under me to intercede in favour of prisoners; so that the seeming severity of my character has better served the cause of humanity than had I appeared directly devoted to it.'

He ceased, and, as Minna replied not a word, both remained silent for a little space, when Cleveland again resumed the discourse.

'You are silent,' he said, 'Miss Troil, and I have injured myself in your opinion by the frankness with which I have laid my character before you. I may truly say that my natural disposition has been controlled, but not altered, by the untoward circumstances in which I am placed.'

'I am uncertain,' said Minna, after a moment's consideration, 'whether you had been thus candid had you not known I should

soon see your comrades, and discover, from their conversation and their manners, what you would otherwise gladly have concealed.'

'You do me injustice, Minna — cruel injustice. From the instant that you knew me to be a sailor of fortune, an adventurer, a buccanier, or, if you will have the broad word, a PIRATE, what had you to expect less than what I have told you?'

'You speak too truly,' said Minna: 'all this I might have anticipated, and I know not how I should have expected it otherwise. But it seemed to me that a war on the cruel and superstitious Spaniards had in it something ennobling — something that refined the fierce employment to which you have just now given its true and dreaded name. I thought that the independent warriors of the Western Ocean, raised up, as it were, to punish the wrongs of so many murdered and plundered tribes, must have had something of gallant elevation, like that of the Sons of the North, whose long galleys avenged on so many coasts the oppressions of degenerate Rome. This I thought and this I dreamed; I grieve that I am awakened and undeceived. Yet I blame you not for the erring of my own fancy. Farewell; we must now part.'

'Say at least,' said Cleveland, 'that you do not hold me in horror for having told you the truth.'

'I must have time for reflection,' said Minna — 'time to weigh what you have said, ere I can fully understand my own feelings. Thus much, however, I can say even now, that he who pursues the wicked purpose of plunder by means of blood and cruelty, and who must veil his remains of natural remorse under an affectation of superior profligacy, is not, and cannot be, the lover whom Minna Troil expected to find in Cleveland; and if she still love him, it must be as a penitent and not as a hero.'

So saying, she extricated herself from his grasp (for he still endeavoured to detain her), making an imperative sign to him to forbear from following her. 'She is gone,' said Cleveland, looking after her; 'wild and fanciful as she is, I expected not this. She startled not at the name of my perilous course of life, yet seems totally unprepared for the evil which must necessarily attend it; and so all the merit I have gained by my resemblance to a Norse champion, or king of the sea, is to be lost at once, because a gang of pirates do not prove to be a choir of saints. I would that Rackam, Hawkins, and the rest had been at the bottom of the Race of Portland — I would the Pentland Firth had swept them to hell rather than to

Orkney! I will not, however, quit the chase of this angel for all that these fiends can do. I will — I must to Orkney before the Udaller makes his voyage thither; our meeting might alarm even his blunt understanding, although, thank Heaven, in this wild country, men know the nature of our trade only by hearsay, through our honest friends the Dutch, who take care never to speak very ill of those they make money by. Well, if fortune would but stand my friend with this beautiful enthusiast, I would pursue her wheel no farther at sea, but set myself down amongst these rocks, as happy as if they were so many groves of bananas and palmettoes.

With these and such thoughts half rolling in his bosom, half expressed in indistinct hints and murmurs, the pirate Cleveland returned to the mansion of Burgh-Westra.

CHAPTER XXIII

There was shaking of hands and sorrow of heart,
For the hour was approaching when merry folks must part ;
So we call'd for our horses, and ask'd for our way,
While the jolly old landlord said, ' Nothing 's to pay.'

Lilliput, a Poem.

WE do not dwell upon the festivities of the day, which had nothing in them to interest the reader particularly. The table groaned under the usual plenty, which was disposed of by the guests with the usual appetite; the bowl of punch was filled and emptied with the same celerity as usual; the men quaffed, and the women laughed; Claud Halero rhymed, punned, and praised John Dryden; the Udaller bumpered and sang choruses; and the evening concluded, as usual, in the rigging-loft, as it was Magnus Troil's pleasure to term the dancing-apartment.

It was then and there that Cleveland, approaching Magnus, where he sat betwixt his two daughters, intimated his intention of going to Kirkwall in a small brig which Bryce Snailsfoot, who had disposed of his goods with unprecedented celerity, had freighted thither to procure a supply.

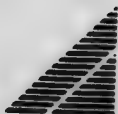
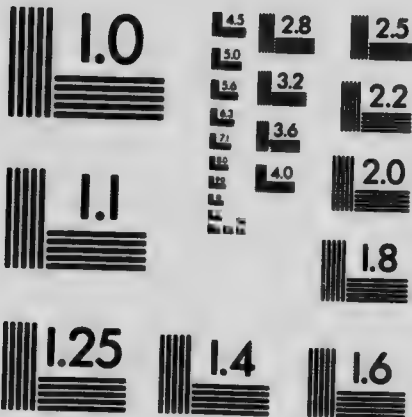
Magnus heard the sudden proposal of his guest with surprise, not unmingled with displeasure, and demanded sharply of Cleveland how long it was since he had learned to prefer Bryce Snailsfoot's company to his own? Cleveland answered, with his usual bluntness of manner, that time and tide tarried for no one, and that he had his own particular reasons for making his trip to Kirkwall sooner than the Udaller proposed to set sail; that he hoped to meet with him and his daughters at the great fair which was now closely approaching, and might perhaps find it possible to return to Zetland along with them.

While he spoke this, Brenda kept her eye as much upon her sister as it was possible to do without exciting general observation. She remarked, that Minna's pale cheek became yet paler while Cleveland spoke, and that she seemed, by compressing her lips and slightly knitting her brows, to be in the



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act of repressing the effects of strong interior emotion. But she spoke not; and when Cleveland, having bidden adieu to the Udaller, approached to salute her, as was then the custom, she received his farewell without trusting herself to attempt a reply.

Brenda had her own trial approaching; for Mordaunt Mertoun, once so much loved by her father, was now in the act of making his cold parting from him, without receiving a single look of friendly regard. There was, indeed, sarcasm in the tone with which Magnus wished the youth a good journey, and recommended to him, if he met a bonny lass by the way, not to dream that she was in love because she chanced to jest with him. Mertoun coloured at what he felt as an insult, though it was but half intelligible to him; but he remembered Brenda, and suppressed every feeling of resentment. He proceeded to take his leave of the sisters. Minna, whose heart was considerably softened towards him, received his farewell with some degree of interest; but Brenda's grief was so visible in the kindness of her manner and the moisture which gathered in her eye, that it was noticed even by the Udaller, who exclaimed, half-angrily, 'Why, ay, lass, that may be right enough, for he was an old acquaintance; but mind! I have no will that he remain one.'

Mertoun, who was slowly leaving the apartment, half overheard this disparaging observation, and half turned round to resent it. But his purpose failed him when he saw that Brenda had been obliged to have recourse to her handkerchief to hide her emotion, and the sense that it was excited by his departure obliterated every thought of her father's unkindness. He retired; the other guests followed his example; and many of them, like Cleveland and himself, took their leave over-night, with the intention of commencing their homeward journey on the succeeding morning.

That night, the mutual sorrow of Minna and Brenda, if it could not wholly remove the reserve which had estranged the sisters from each other, at least melted all its frozen and unkindly symptoms. They wept in each other's arms; and though neither spoke, yet each became dearer to the other: because they felt that the grief which called forth these drops had a source common to them both.

It is probable that, though Brenda's tears were most abundant, the grief of Minna was most deeply seated; for, long after the younger had sobbed herself asleep, like a child, upon her sister's bosom, Minna lay awake, watching the dubious twilight, while tear after tear slowly gathered in her eye, and

found a current down her cheek, as soon as it became too heavy to be supported by her long black silken eyelashes. As she lay, bewildered among the sorrowful thoughts which supplied these tears, she was surprised to distinguish, beneath the window, the sounds of music. At first she supposed it was some freak of Claud Halero, whose fantastic humour sometimes indulged itself in such serenades. But it was not the *gue* of the old minstrel, but the guitar, that she heard — an instrument which none in the island knew how to touch except Cleveland, who had learned, in his intercourse with the South-American Spaniards, to play on it with superior execution. Perhaps it was in these climates also that he had learned the song, which, though he now sung it under the window of a maiden of Thule, had certainly never been composed for the native of a climate so northerly and so severe, since it spoke of productions of the earth and skies which are there unknown.

I

'Love wakes and weeps
While beauty sleeps:
O for music's softest numbers,
To prompt a theme,
For beauty's dream,
Soft as the pillow of her slumbers !

II

Through groves of palm
Sigh gales of balm,
Fire-flies on the air are wheeling ;
While through the gloom
Comes soft perfume,
The distant beds of flowers revealing.

III

O wake and live,
No dream can give
A shadow'd bliss, the real excelling ;
No longer sleep,
From lattice peep,
And list the tale that Love is telling !'

The voice of Cleveland was deep, rich, and manly, and accorded well with the Spanish air, to which the words, probably a translation from the same language, had been adapted. His invocation would not probably have been fruitless, could Minna have arisen without awaking her sister. But that was impossible ; for Brenda, who, as we have already mentioned, had wept bitterly before she had sunk into repose, now lay with her face

on her sister's neck, and one arm stretched around her, in the attitude of a child which has cried itself asleep in the arms of its nurse. It was impossible for Minna to extricate herself from her grasp without awakening her; and she could not, therefore, execute her hasty purpose of donning her gown and approaching the window to speak with Cleveland, who, she had no doubt, had resorted to this contrivance to procure an interview. The restraint was sufficiently provoking, for it was more than probable that her lover came to take his last farewell; but that Brenda, inimical as she seemed to be of late towards Cleveland, should awake and witness it was a thought not to be endured.

There was a short pause, in which Minna endeavoured more than once, with as much gentleness as possible, to unclasp Brenda's arm from her neck; but whenever she attempted it, the slumberer muttered some little pettish sound, like a child disturbed in its sleep, which sufficiently showed that perseverance in the attempt would awaken her fully.

To her great vexation, therefore, Minna was compelled to remain still and silent; when her lover, as if determined upon gaining her ear by music of another strain, sung the following fragment of a sea-ditty:—

'Farewell! farewell! the voice you hear
Has left its last soft tone with you;
Its next must join the seaward cheer,
And shout among the shouting crew.

The accents which I scarce could form,
Beneath your frown's controlling check,
Must give the word, above the storm,
To cut the mast and clear the wreck.

The timid eye I dared not raise,
The hand that shook when press'd to thine,
Must point the guns upon the chase,
Must bid the deadly cutlass shine.

To all I love, or hope, or fear,
Honour, or own, a long adieu!
To all that life has soft and dear,
Farewell! save memory of you!'¹

He was again silent; and again she to whom the serenade was addressed strove in vain to arise without rousing her sister. It was impossible; and she had nothing before her but the unhappy thought that Cleveland was taking leave in his desola-

¹ I cannot suppress the pride of saying, that these lines have been beautifully set to original music by Mrs. Arkwright of Derbyshire.

tion without a single glance or a single word. He, too, whose temper was so fiery, yet who subjected his violent mood with such sedulous attention to her will — could she but have stolen a moment to say adieu, to caution him against new quarrels with Mertoun, to implore him to detach himself from such comrades as he had described — could she but have done this, who could say what effect such parting admonitions might have had upon his character — nay, upon the future events of his life?

Tantalised by such thoughts, Minna was about to make another and decisive effort, when she heard voices beneath the window, and thought she could distinguish that they were those of Cleveland and Mertoun, speaking in a sharp tone, which, at the same time, seemed cautiously suppressed, as if the speakers feared being overheard. Alarm now mingled with her former desire to rise from bed, and she accomplished at once the purpose which she had so often attempted in vain. Brenda's arm was unloosed from her sister's neck without the sleeper receiving more alarm than provoked two or three unintelligible murmurs; while, with equal speed and silence, Minna put on some part of her dress, with the intention to steal to the window. But, ere she could accomplish this, the sound of the voices without was exchanged for that of blows and struggling, which terminated suddenly by a deep groan.

Terrified at this last signal of mischief, Minna sprung to the window and endeavoured to open it, for the persons were so close under the walls of the house that she could not see them save by putting her head out of the casement. The iron hasp was stiff and rusted, and, as generally happens, the haste with which she laboured to undo it only rendered the task more difficult. When it was accomplished, and Minna had eagerly thrust her body half out at the casement, those who had created the sounds which alarmed her were become invisible, excepting that she saw a shadow cross the moonlight, the substance of which must have been in the act of turning a corner, which concealed it from her sight. The shadow moved slowly, and seemed that of a man who supported another upon his shoulders — an indication which put the climax to Minna's agony of mind. The window was not above eight feet from the ground, and she hesitated not to throw herself from it hastily, and to pursue the object which had excited her terror.

But when she came to the corner of the buildings from which the shadow seemed to have been projected, she discovered nothing which could point out the way that the figure had gone; and,

after a moment's consideration, became sensible that all attempts at pursuit would be alike wild and fruitless. Besides all the projections and recesses of the many-angled mansion and its numerous offices — besides the various cellars, store-houses, stables, and so forth, which defied her solitary search, there was a range of low rocks, stretching down to the haven, and which were, in fact, a continuation of the ridge which formed its pier. These rocks had many indentures, hollows, and caverns, into any one of which the figure to which the shadow belonged might have retired with his fatal burden ; for fatal, she feared, it was most likely to prove.

A moment's reflection, as we have said, convinced Minna of the folly of further pursuit. Her next thought was to alarm the family ; but what tale had she to tell, and of whom was that tale to be told ? On the other hand, the wounded man — if indeed he were wounded — alas, if indeed he were not mortally wounded ! — might not be past the reach of assistance ; and, with this idea, she was about to raise her voice, when she was interrupted by that of Claud Halcro, who was returning apparently from the haven, and singing, in his manner, a scrap of an old Norse ditty, which might run thus in English :

'And you shall deal the funeral dole ;
Ay, deal it, mother mine,
To weary body, and to heavy soul,
The white bread and the wine.

And you shall deal my horses of pride ;
Ay, deal them, mother mine ;
And you shall deal my lands so wide,
And deal my castles nine.

But deal not vengeance for the deed,
And deal not for the crime ;
The body to its place, and the soul to Heaven's grace,
And the rest in God's own time.'

The singular adaptation of these rhymes to the situation in which she found herself seemed to Minna like a warning from Heaven. We are speaking of a land of omens and superstitions, and perhaps will scarce be understood by those whose limited imagination cannot conceive how strongly these operate upon the human mind during a certain progress of society. A line of Virgil, turned up casually, was received in the 17th century, and in the court of England,¹ as an intimation of future

¹ The celebrated *sortes Virgilianæ* were resorted to by Charles I. and his courtiers as a mode of prying into futurity.

events; and no wonder that a maiden of the distant and wild isles of Zetland should have considered as an injunction from Heaven verses which happened to convey a sense analogous to her present situation.

'I will be silent,' she muttered — 'I will seal my lips —

The body to its place, and the soul to Heaven's grace,
And the rest in God's own time.'

'Who speaks there?' said Claud Halero, in some alarm, for he had not, in his travels in foreign parts, been able by any means to rid himself of his native superstitions. In the condition to which fear and horror had reduced her, Minna was at first unable to reply; and Halero, fixing his eyes upon the female white figure, which he saw indistinctly (for she stood in the shadow of the house, and the morning was thick and misty), began to conjure her in an ancient rhyme which occurred to him as suited for the occasion, and which had in its gibberish a wild and unearthly sound, which may be lost in the ensuing translation :

'St. Magnus control thee, that martyr of treason;
St. Ronan rebuke thee, with rhyme and with reason;
By the mass of St. Martin, the might of St. Mary,
Be thou gone, or thy weird shall be worse if thou tarry!
If of good, go hence and hallow thee;
If of ill, let the earth swallow thee;
If thou'rt of air, let the grey mist fold thee;
If of earth, let the swart mine hold thee;
If a pixie, seek thy ring;
If a nixie, seek thy spring;
If on middle earth thou'st been
Slave of sorrow, shame, and sin,
Hast eat the bread of toil and strife,
And dree'd the lot which men call life,
Begone to thy stone! for thy coffin is scant of thee,
The worm, thy playfellow, wails for the want of thee;
Hence, houseless ghost! let the earth hide thee,
Till Michael shall blow the blast, see that there thou bide thee!
Phantom, fly hence! take the Cross for a token,
Hence pass till Hallowmass! — my spell is spoken.'

'It is I, Halero,' muttered Minna, in a tone so thin and low that it might have passed for the faint reply of the conjured phantom.

'You! — you!' said Halero, his tone of alarm changing to one of extreme surprise; 'by this moonlight, which is waning, and so it is! Who could have thought to find you, my most lovely Night, wandering abroad in your own element! But

you saw them, I reckon, as well as I? bold enough in you to follow them, though.'

'Saw whom? — follow whom?' said Minna, hoping to gain some information on the subject of her fears and her anxiety.

'The corpse-lights which danced at the haven,' replied Halero; 'they bode no good, I promise you: you wot well what the old rhyme says —

Where corpse-light
Dances bright,
Be it day or night,
Be it by light or dark,
There shall corpse lie stiff and stark.

I went half as far as the haven to look after them, but they had vanished. I think I saw a boat put off, however; some one bound for the haaf, I suppose. I would we had good news of this fishing. There was Norna left us in anger, and then these corpse-lights! Well, God help the while! I am an old man, and can but wish that all were well over. But how now, my pretty Minna, tears in your eyes! And now that I see you in the fair moonlight, barefooted, too, by St. Magnus! Were there no stockings of Zetland wool soft enough for these pretty feet and ankles, that glance so white in the moonbeam! What, silent! — angry, perhaps,' he added, in a more serious tone, 'at my nonsense? For shame, silly maiden! Remember I am old enough to be your father, and have always loved you as my child.'

'I am not angry,' said Minna, constraining herself to speak, 'but heard you nothing? — saw you nothing? They must have passed you.'

'They!' said Claud Halero; 'what mean you by they? Is the corpse-lights? No, they did not pass by me, but I think they have passed by you, and blighted you with their influence, for you are as pale as a spectre. Come — come, Minna,' he added, opening a side-door of the dwelling, 'these moonlight walks are fitter for old poets than for young maidens. And so lightly clad as you are! Maiden, you should take care how you give yourself to the breezes of a Zetland night, for they bring more sleet than odours upon their wings. But, maiden, go in; for, as glorious John says — or, as he does not say, for I cannot remember how his verse chimes — but, as I say myself, in a pretty poem, written when my muse was in her teens —

Menseful maiden ne'er should rise,
Till the first beam tinge the skies ;
Silk-fringed eyelids still should close,
Till the sun has kiss'd the rose ;
Maiden's foot we should not view,
Mark'd with tiny print on dew,
Till the opening flowerets spread
Carpet meet for beauty's tread —

Stay, what comes next ? — let me see.'

When the spirit of recitation seized on Claud Halero, he forgot time and place, and might have kept his companion in the cold air for half an hour, giving poetical reasons why she ought to have been in bed. But she interrupted him by the question, earnestly pronounced, yet in a voice which was scarcely articulate, holding Halero, at the same time, with a trembling and convulsive grasp, as if to support herself from falling, 'Saw you no one in the boat which put to sea but now ?'

'Nonsense,' replied Halero ; 'how could I see any one, when light and distance only enabled me to know that it was a boat, and not a grampus ?'

'But there must have been some one in the boat,' repeated Minna, scarce conscious of what she said.

'Certainly,' answered the poet, 'boats seldom work to windward of their own accord. But come, this is all folly ; and so, as the queen says in an old play, which was revived for the stage by rare Will D'Avenant, "To bed — to bed — to bed !"'

They separated, and Minna's limbs conveyed her with difficulty, through several devious passages, to her own chamber, where she stretched herself cautiously beside her still sleeping sister, with a mind harassed with the most agonising apprehensions. That she had heard Cleveland, she was positive ; the tenor of the songs left her no doubt on that subject. If not equally certain that she had heard young Mertoun's voice in hot quarrel with her lover, the impression to that effect was strong on her mind. The groan with which the struggle seemed to terminate, the fearful indication from which it seemed that the conqueror had borne off the lifeless body of his victim — all tended to prove that some fatal event had concluded the contest. And which of the unhappy men had fallen ? — which had met a bloody death ? — which had achieved a fatal and a bloody victory ? These were questions to which the still small voice of interior conviction answered,

that her lover Cleveland, from character, temper, and habits, was most likely to have been the survivor of the fray. She received from the reflection an involuntary consolation which she almost detested herself for admitting, when she recollected that it was at once darkened with her lover's guilt and imbibed with the destruction of Brenda's happiness for ever.

'Innocent, unhappy sister!' such were her reflections, 'then that art ten times better than I, because so unpretending so unassuming in thine excellence! How is it possible that I should cease to feel a pang which is only transferred from my bosom to thine?'

As these cruel thoughts crossed her mind, she could not refrain from straining her sister so close to her bosom that, after a heavy sigh, Brenda awoke.

'Sister,' she said, 'is it you? I dreamed I lay on one of those monuments which Claud Halero described to us, where the effigy of the inhabitant beneath lies carved in stone upon the sepulchre. I dreamed such a marble form lay by my side, and that it suddenly acquired enough of life and animation to fold me to its cold, moist bosom; and it is yours, Minna, that is indeed so chilly. You are ill, my dearest Minna! for God's sake, let me rise and call Euphane Fea. What ails you? Has Norna been here again?'

'Call no one hither,' said Minna, detaining her; 'nothing ails me for which any one has a remedy — nothing but apprehensions of evil worse than even Norna could prophesy. But God is above all, my dear Brenda; and let us pray to Him to turn, as He only can, our evil into good.'

They did jointly repeat their usual prayer for strength and protection from on high, and again composed themselves to sleep, suffering no word save 'God bless you!' to pass betwixt them when their devotions were finished; thus scrupulously dedicating to Heaven their last waking words, if human frailty prevented them from commanding their last waking thoughts. Brenda slept first, and Minna, strongly resisting the dark and evil presentiments which again began to crowd themselves upon her imagination, was at last so fortunate as to slumber also.

The storm which Halero had expected began about day-break — a squall, heavy with wind and rain, such as is often felt, even during the finest part of the season, in these latitudes. At the whistle of the wind and the clatter of the rain on the shingle-roofing of the fishers' huts, many a poor woman was awakened, and called on her children to hold up their little

hands and join in prayer for the safety of the dear husband and father who was even then at the mercy of the disturbed elements. Around the house of Burgh-Westra, chimneys howled and windows clashed. The props and rafters of the higher parts of the building, most of them formed out of wreck-wood, groaned and quivered, as fearing to be again dispersed by the tempest. But the daughters of Magnus Troil continued to sleep as softly and as sweetly as if the hand of Chantrey had formed them out of statuary marble. The squall had passed away, and the sunbeams, dispersing the clouds which drifted to leeward, shone full through the lattice, when Minna first started from the profound sleep into which fatigue and mental exhaustion had lulled her, and, raising herself on her arm, began to recall events, which, after this interval of profound repose, seemed almost to resemble the baseless visions of the night. She almost doubted if what she recalled of horror, previous to her starting from her bed, was not indeed the fiction of a dream, suggested, perhaps, by some external sounds.

'I will see Claud Halero instantly,' she said; 'he may know something of these strange noises, as he was stirring at the time.'

With that she sprung from bed, but hardly stood upright on the floor ere her sister exclaimed, 'Gracious Heaven! Minna, what ails your foot — your ankle?'

She looked down, and saw with surprise, which amounted to agony, that both her feet, but particularly one of them, was stained with dark crimson, resembling the colour of dried blood.

Without attempting to answer Brenda, she rushed to the window and cast a desperate look on the grass beneath, for there she knew she must have contracted the fatal stain. But the rain, which had fallen there in treble quantity, as well from the heavens as from the eaves of the house, had washed away that guilty witness, if indeed such had ever existed. All was fresh and green, and the blades of grass, overcharged and bent with raindrops, glittered like diamonds in the bright morning sun.

While Minna gazed upon the spangled verdure, with her full dark eyes fixed and enlarged to circles by the intensity of her terror, Brenda was hanging about her, and with many an eager inquiry pressed to know whether or how she had hurt herself?

'A piece of glass cut through my shoe,' said Minna, be-

thinking herself that some excuse was necessary to her sister : 'I scarce felt it at the time.'

'And yet see how it has bled,' said her sister. 'Sweet Minna,' she added, approaching her with a wetted towel, 'let me wipe the blood off — the hurt may be worse than you think of.'

But as she approached, Minna, who saw no other way of preventing discovery that the blood with which she was stained had never flowed in her own veins, harshly and hastily repelled the proffered kindness. Poor Brenda, unconscious of any offence which she had given to her sister, drew back two or three paces on finding her service thus unkindly refused, and stood gazing at Minna with looks in which there was more of surprise and mortified affection than of resentment, but which had yet something also of natural displeasure.

'Sister,' said she, 'I thought we had agreed but last night that, happen to us what might, we would at least love each other.'

'Much may happen betwixt night and morning !' answered Minna, in words rather wrenched from her by her situation than flowing forth the voluntary interpreters of her thoughts.

'Much may indeed have happened in a night so stormy,' answered Brenda ; 'for see where the very wall around Euphane's plant-a-cruive has been blown down ; but neither wind nor rain, nor aught else, can cool our affection, Minna.'

'But that may chance,' replied Minna, 'which may convert it into —'

The rest of the sentence she muttered in a tone so indistinct that it could not be apprehended, while, at the same time, she washed the blood-stains from her feet and left ankle. Brenda, who still remained looking on at some distance, endeavoured in vain to assume some tone which might re-establish kindness and confidence betwixt them.

'You were right,' she said. Minna, to suffer no one to help you to dress so simple as I do ; standing where I do, it is scarce visible.'

'The most cruel wounds,' replied Minna, 'are those which make no outward show. Are you sure you see it at all ?'

'Oh yes !' replied Brenda, framing her answer as she thought would best please her sister, 'I see a very slight scratch ; nay, now you draw on the stocking, I can see nothing.'

'You do indeed see nothing,' answered Minna, somewhat wildly ; 'but the time will soon come that all — ay, all — will be seen and known.'

So saying, she hastily completed her dress, and led the way to breakfast, where she assumed her place amongst the guests; but with a countenance so pale and haggard, and manners and speech so altered and so bewildered, that it excited the attention of the whole company, and the utmost anxiety on the part of her father Magnus Troil. Many and various were the conjectures of the guests concerning a distemperature which seemed rather mental than corporeal. Some hinted that the maiden had been struck with an evil eye, and something they muttered about Norna of the Pitful Head; some talked of the departure of Captain Cleveland, and murmured, 'It was a shame for a young lady to take on so after a landlouser of whom no one knew anything'; and this contemptuous epithet was in particular bestowed on the captain by Mistress Baby Yellowley, while she was in the act of wrapping round her old skinny neck the very handsome 'owelay,' as she called it, wherewith the said captain had presented her. The old Lady Glowrowrum had a system of her own, which she hinted to Mistress Yellowley, after thanking God that her own connexion with the Burgh-Westra family was by the lass's mother, who was a canny Scotswoman, like herself.

'For, as to these Troils, you see, Dame Yellowley, for as high as they hold their heads, they say that ken (winking sagaciously) that there is a bee in their bonnet. That Norna, as they call her, for it's not her right name neither, is at whiles far beside her right mind; and they that ken the cause say the Fowd was some gate or other linked in with it, for he will never hear at all word of her. But I was in Scotland then, or I might have kend the real cause as weel as other folk. At ony rate, there is a kind of wildness in the blood. Ye ken very weel daft folk dinna bide to be contradicted; and I'll say that for the Fowd, he likes to be contradicted as ill as ony man in Zetland. But it shall never be said that I said ony ill of the house that I am sae nearly connected wi'. Only ye will mind, dame, it is through the Sinclairs that we are akin, not through the Troils; and the Sinclairs are ken'd far and wide for a wise generation, dame. But I see there is the stirrup cup coming round.'

'I wonder,' said Mistress Baby to her brother, as soon as the Lady Glowrowrum turned from her, 'what gars that muckle wife "dame, dame, dame" that gate at me? She might ken the blude of the Clinkscals is as gude as ony Glowrowrum's amang them.'

The guests, meanwhile, were fast taking their departure,

scarcely noticed by Magnus, who was so much engrossed with Minna's indisposition that, contrary to his hospitable wont, he suffered them to go away unsaluted. And thus concluded, amidst anxiety and illness, the festival of St. John, as celebrated on that season at the house of Burgh-Westra, adding another caution to that of the Emperor of Ethiopia — with how little security man can reckon upon the days which he destines to happiness.

CHAPTER XXIV

But this sad evil which doth her infest,
Doth course of natural cause far exceed,
And housed is within her hollow breast,
That either seems some cursed witch's deed,
Or evill spright that in her doth such torment breed.

Faëry Queene, Book III. Canto III.

THE term had now elapsed, by several days, when Mordaunt Mertoun, as he had promised at his departure, should have returned to his father's abode at Jarlshof; but there were no tidings of his arrival. Such delay might, at another time, have excited little curiosity, and no anxiety; for old Swertha, who took upon her the office of thinking and conjecturing for the little household, would have concluded that he had remained behind the other guests upon some party of sport or pleasure. But she knew that Mordaunt had not been lately in favour with Magnus Troil; she knew that he proposed his stay at Burgh-Westra should be a short one, upon account of his father's health, to whom, notwithstanding the little encouragement which his filial piety received, he paid uniform attention. Swertha knew all this, and she became anxious. She watched the looks of her master, the elder Mertoun; but, wrapt in dark and stern uniformity of composure, his countenance, like the surface of a midnight lake, enabled no one to penetrate into what was beneath. His studies, his solitary meals, his lonely walks, succeeded each other in unvaried rotation, and seemed undisturbed by the least thought about Mordaunt's absence.

At length such reports reached Swertha's ear, from various quarters, that she became totally unable to conceal her anxiety, and resolved, at the risk of provoking her master into fury, or perhaps that of losing her place in his household, to force upon his notice the doubts which afflicted her own mind. Mordaunt's good-humour and goodly person must indeed have made no small impression on the withered and selfish heart of the poor

old woman, to induce her to take a course so desperate, and from which her friend the Ranzelman endeavoured in vain to deter her. Still, however, conscious that a miscarriage in the matter would, like the loss of Trinculo's bottle in the horse pool, be attended not only with dishonour but with infinite loss, she determined to proceed on her high emprise with as much caution as was consistent with the attempt.

We have already mentioned, that it seemed a part of the very nature of this reserved and unsocial being, at least since his retreat into the utter solitude of Jarlishof, to endure no one to start a subject of conversation, or to put any question to him, that did not arise out of urgent and pressing emergency. Swertha was sensible, therefore, that, in order to open the discourse favourably which she proposed to hold with her master, she must contrive that it should originate with himself.

To accomplish this purpose, while busied in preparing the table for Mr. Mertoun's simple and solitary dinner-meal, she formally adorned the board with two covers instead of one, and made all her other preparations as if he was to have a guest or companion at dinner.

The artifice succeeded; for Mertoun, on coming from his study, no sooner saw the table thus arranged than he asked Swertha, who, waiting the effect of the stratagem as a fisher watches his ground-baits, was fiddling up and down the room, 'Whether Mordaunt was not returned from Burgh-Westra?'

This question was the cue for Swertha, and she answered in a voice of sorrowful anxiety, half-real, half-affected, 'Na, na! nae sic divot had dunted at their door. It wad be blithe news indeed to ken that young Maister Mordaunt, puir dear bairn, were safe at hame.'

'And if he be not at home, why should you lay a cover for him, you doting fool?' replied Mertoun, in a tone well calculated to stop the old woman's proceedings. But she replied boldly, 'That, indeed, somebody should take thought about Maister Mordaunt; a' that she could do was to have seat and plate ready for him when he came. But she thought the dear bairn had been ower lang awa'; and, if she maun speak out, she had her ain fears when and whether he might ever come hame.'

'Your fears!' replied Mertoun, his eyes flashing as they usually did when his hour of ungovernable passion approached; 'do you speak of your idle fears to me, who know that all of your sex, that is not fickleness, and folly, and self-conceit, and

self-will, is a bundle of idiotical fears, vapours, and tremors? What are your fears to me, you foolish old hag?

It is an admirable quality in womankind that, when a breach of the laws of natural affection comes under their observation, the whole sex is in arms. Let a rumour arise in the street of a parent that has misused a child, or a child that has insulted a parent — I say nothing of the case of husband and wife, where the interest may be accounted for in sympathy — and all the women within hearing will take animated and decided part with the sufferer. Swertha, notwithstanding her greed and avarice, had her share of the generous feeling which does so much honour to her sex, and was, on this occasion, so much carried on by its impulse that she confronted her master, and upbraided him with his hard-hearted indifference, with a boldness at which she herself was astonished.

‘To be sure, it wasna her that suld be fearing for her young maister, Maister Mordaunt, even although he was, as she might weel say, the very sea-calf of her heart; but ony other father but his honour himsel wad have had speerings made after the poor lad, and him gane this eight days from Burgh-Westra, and naebody kend when or where he had gane. There wasna a bairn in the howff but was maining for him; for he made all their bits of boats with his knife; there wadna be a dry eye in the parish if aught worse than weal should befall him — na, no ane, unless it might be his honour’s ain.’

Mertoun had been much struck, and even silenced, by the insolent volubility of his insurgent housekeeper; but, at the last sarcasm, he imposed on her silence in her turn with an audible voice, accompanied with one of the most terrific glances which his dark eye and stern features could express. But Swertha, who, as she afterwards acquainted the Ranzelman, was wonderfully supported during the whole scene, would not be controlled by the loud voice and ferocious look of her master, but proceeded in the same tone as before.

‘His honour,’ she said, ‘had made an unco wark because a wheen bits of kists and duds, that naebody had use for, had been gathered on the beach by the poor bodies of the township: and here was the bravest lad in the country lost, and cast away, as it were, before his een, and nae ane asking what was come o’ him.’

‘What should come of him but good, you old fool,’ answered Mr. Mertoun, ‘as far, at least, as there can be good in any of the follies he spends his time in?’

This was spoken rather in a scornful than an angry tone, and

Swertha, who had got into the spirit of the dialogue, was resolved not to let it drop, now that the fire of her opponent seemed to slacken.

'O ay, to be sure I am an auld fule; but if Maister Mordaunt should have settled down in the Roost, as mair than ae boat has been lost in that wearifu' squall the other morning - by good luck it was short as it was sharp, or naething could have lived in it; or if he were drowned in a loch coming hame on foot; or if he were killed by miss of footing on a craig - the haill island kend how venturesome he was - who,' said Swertha, 'will be the auld fule then?' And she added a pathetic ejaculation, that 'God would protect the poor motherless bairn! for if he had had a mother, there would have been search made after him before now.'

This last sarcasm affected Mertoun powerfully: his jaw quivered, his face grew pale, and he muttered to Swertha to go into his study (where she was scarcely ever permitted to enter) and fetch him a bottle which stood there.

'O ho!' quoth Swertha to herself, as she hastened on the commission, 'my master knows where to find a cup of comfort to qualify his water with upon fitting occasions.'

There was indeed a case of such bottles as were usually employed to hold strong waters, but the dust and cobwebs in which they were enveloped showed that they had not been touched for many years. With some difficulty Swertha extracted the cork of one of them by the help of a fork - for corkscrew was there none at Jarlshof - and having ascertained by smell, and, in case of any mistake, by a moderate mouthful, that it contained wholesome Barbadoes waters, she carried it into the room, where her master still continued to struggle with his faintness. She then began to pour a small quantity into the nearest cup that she could find, wisely judging that, upon a person so much unaccustomed to the use of spirituous liquors, a little might produce a strong effect. But the patient signed to her impatiently to fill the cup, which might hold more than the third of an English pint measure, up to the very brim, and swallowed it down without hesitation.

'Now the saunts above have a care on us!' said Swertha; 'he will be drunk as weel as mad, and wha is to guide him then, I wonder?'

But Mertoun's breath and colour returned, without the slightest symptom of intoxication; on the contrary, Swertha afterwards reported that, 'Although she had always had a firm

opinion in favour of a dram, yet she never saw one work such miracles : he spoke mair like a man of the middle world than she had ever heard him do since she had entered his service.'

'Swertha,' he said, 'you are right in this matter, and I was wrong. Go down to the Ranzelman directly, tell him to come and speak with me without an instant's delay, and bring me special word what boats and people he can command ; I will employ them all in the search, and they shall be plentifully rewarded.'

Stimulated by the spur which maketh the old woman proverbially to trot, Swertha posted down to the hamlet with all the speed of threescore, rejoicing that her sympathetic feelings were likely to achieve their own reward, having given rise to a quest which promised to be so lucrative, and in the profits whereof she was determined to have her share, shouting out as she went, and long before she got within hearing, the names of Neil Ronaldson, Sweyn Erickson, and the other friends and confederates who were interested in her mission. To say the truth, notwithstanding that the good dame really felt a deep interest in Mordaunt Mertoun, and was mentally troubled on account of his absence, perhaps few things would have disappointed her more than if he had at this moment started up in her path safe and sound, and rendered unnecessary, by his appearance, the expense and the bustle of searching after him.

Soon did Swertha accomplish her business in the village, and adjust with the senators of the township her own little share of percentage upon the profits likely to accrue on her mission ; and speedily did she return to Jarlshof, with Neil Ronaldson by her side, schooling him to the best of her skill in all the peculiarities of her master.

'Aboon a' things,' she said, 'never make him wait for an answer ; and speak loud and distinct, as if you were hailing a boat, for he downa bide to say the same thing twice over ; and if he asks about distance, ye may make leagues for miles, for he kens naething about the face of the earth that he lives upon ; and if he speak of siller, ye may ask dollars for shillings, for he minds them nae mair than selate-stanes.'

Thus tutored, Neil Ronaldson was introduced into the presence of Mertoun, but was utterly confounded to find that he could not act upon the system of deception which had been projected. When he attempted, by some exaggeration of distance and peril, to enhance the hire of the boats and of the men (for the search was to be by sea and land), he found him-

self at once cut short by Mertoun, who showed not only the most perfect knowledge of the country, but of distances, tides, currents, and all belonging to the navigation of those seas, although these were topics with which he had hitherto appeared to be totally unacquainted. The Ranzelman, therefore, trembled when they came to speak of the recompense to be afforded for their exertions in the search; for it was not more unlikely that Mertoun should be as well informed of what was just and proper upon this head as upon others; and Neil remembered the storm of his fury when, at an early period after he had settled at Jarlishof, he drove Swertha and Sweyn Erickson from his presence. As, however, he stood hesitating betwixt the opposite fears of asking too much or too little, Mertoun stopped his mouth and ended his uncertainty by promising him a recompense beyond what he dared to have ventured to ask, with an additional gratuity in case they returned with the pleasing intelligence that his son was safe.

When this great point was settled, Neil Ronaldson, like a man of conscience, began to consider earnestly the various places where search should be made after the young man; and having undertaken faithfully that the inquiry should be prosecuted at all the houses of the gentry, both in this and the neighbouring islands, he added that, 'After all, if his honour would not be angry, there was ane not far off that, if anybody dared speer her a question, and if she liked to answer it, could tell more about Maister Mordaunt than anybody else could. Ye will ken wha I mean, Swertha? Her that was down at the haven this morning.' Thus he concluded, addressing himself with a mysterious look to the housekeeper, which she answered with a nod and a wink.

'How mean you?' said Mertoun; 'speak out, short and open — whom do you speak of?'

'It is Norna of the Fitful Head,' said Swertha, 'that the Ranzelman is thinking about; for she has gone up to St. Ringan's kirk this morning on business of her own.'

'And what can this person know of my son?' said Mertoun: 'she is, I believe, a wandering madwoman or impostor.'

'If she wanders,' said Swertha, 'it is for nae lack of means at hame, and that is weel known: plenty of a' thing has she of her ain, forbye that the Fowd himsell would let her want naething.'

'But what is that to my son?' said Mertoun, impatiently.

'I dinna ken; she took unco pleasure in Maister Mordaunt

from the time she first saw him, and mony a braw thing she gave him at ae time or another, forbye the gowd chain that hangs about his bonny craig. Folk say it is of fairy gold. I kenna what gold it is; but Bryce Snailsfoot says that the value will mount to an hundred pounds English, and that is nae deef nuts.'

'Go, Ronaldson,' said Mertoun, 'or else send some one, to seek this woman out — if you think there be a chance of her knowing anything of my son.'

'She kens a'thing that happens in thae islands,' said Neil Ronaldson, 'muckle sooner than other folk, and that is Heaven's truth. But as to going to the kirk, or the kirk-yard, to speer after her, there is not a man in Zetland will do it, for meed or for money, and that's Heaven's truth as weel as the other.'

'Cowardly, superstitious fools!' said Mertoun. 'But give me my cloak, Swertha. This woman has been at Burgh-Westra — she is related to Troil's family — she may know something of Mordaunt's absence and its cause. I will seek her myself. She is at the Cross kirk, you say?'

'No, not at the Cross kirk, but at the auld kirk of St. Ringan's. It's a dowie bit, and far frae being canny; and if your honour,' added Swertha, 'wad walk by my rule, I wad wait until she came back, and no trouble her when she may be mair busied wi' the dead, for ony thing that we ken, than she is wi' the living. The like of her carena to have other folks' een on them when they are, gude sain us! doing their ain particular turns.'

Mertoun made no answer, but throwing his cloak loosely around him (for the day was misty, with passing showers), and leaving the decayed mansion of Jarlshof, he walked at a pace much faster than was usual with him, taking the direction of the ruinous church, which stood, as he well knew, within three or four miles of his dwelling.

The Ranzelman and Swertha stood gazing after him in silence, until he was fairly out of ear-shot, when, looking seriously on each other, and shaking their sagacious heads in the same boding degree of vibration, they uttered their remarks in the same breath.

'Fools are aye fleet and fain,' said Swertha.

'Fey folk run fast,' added the Ranzelman; 'and the thing that we are born to, we cannot win by. I have known them that tried to stop folk that were fey. You have heard of Helen

Emberson of Camsey, how she stopped all the boles and windows about the house, that her gudeman might not see daylight, and rise to the haaf-fishing, because she feared foul weather; and how the boat he should have sailed in was lost in the Roost; and how she came back, rejoicing in her gudeman's safety; but ne'er may care! for there she found him drowned in his own masking-fat, within the wa's of his ain bigging; and more-over —

But here Swertha reminded the Ranzelman that he must go down to the haven to get off the fishing-boats; 'For both that my heart is sair for the bonny lad, and that I am fear'd he cast up of his ain accord before you are at sea; and, as I have often told ye, my master may lead but he winna drive; and if ye do not his bidding and get out to sea, the never a bodle of boat-hire will ye see.'

'Weel — weel, good dame,' said the Ranzelman, 'we will launch as fast as we can; and, by good luck, neither Clawson's boat nor Peter Grot's is out to the haaf this morning, for a rabbit ran across the path as they were going on board, and they came back like wise men, kenning they wad be called to other wark this day. And a marvel it is to think, Swertha, how few real judicious men are left in this land. There is our great Udaller is weel enough when he is fresh, but he makes ower mony voyages in his ship and his yawl to be lang sae; and now they say his daughter, Mistress Minna, is sair out of sorts. Then there is Norna kens muckle mair than other folk, but wise woman ye cannot call her. Our tacksman here, Maister Mertoun, his wit is sprung in the bowsprit, I doubt; his son is a daft gowk; and I ken few of consequence hereabouts — excepting always myself, and maybe you, Swertha — but what may, in some sense or other, be called fules.'

'That may be, Neil Ronaldson,' said the dame; 'but if you do not hasten the faster to the shore, you will lose tide; and, as I said to my master some short time syne, wha will be the fule then?'

CHAPTER XXV

I do love these ancient ruins.
We never tread upon them but we set
Our foot upon some reverend history ;
And, questionless, here, in this open court
(Which now lies naked to the injuries
Of stormy weather), some men lie interr'd,
Loved the church so well, and gave so largely to it,
They thought it should have canopied their bones
Till doomsday ; but all things have their end :
Churches and cities, which have diseases like to men,
Must have like death which we have.

Duchess of Malfy.

THE ruinous church of St. Ninian had, in its time, enjoyed great celebrity ; for that mighty system of Roman superstition which spread its roots over all Europe had not failed to extend them even to this remote archipelago, and Zetland had, in the Catholic times, her saints, her shrines, and her relics, which, though little known elsewhere, attracted the homage, and commanded the observance, of the simple inhabitants of Thule. Their devotion to this church of St. Ninian, or, as he was provincially termed, St. Ringan, situated, as the edifice was, close to the sea-beach, and serving, in many points, as a land-mark to their boats, was particularly obstinate, and was connected with so much superstitious ceremonial and credulity that the Reformed clergy thought it best, by an order of the church courts, to prohibit all spiritual service within its walls, as tending to foster the rooted faith of the simple and rude people around in saint-worship and other erroneous doctrines of the Romish Church.

After the church of St. Ninian had been thus denounced as a seat of idolatry, and desecrated of course, the public worship was transferred to another church ; and the roof, with its lead and its rafters, having been stripped from the little rude old Gothic building, it was left in the wilderness to the mercy of

the elements. The fury of the uncontrolled winds, which howled along an exposed space resembling that which we have described at Jarlshof, very soon choked up nave and aisle, and on the north-west side, which was chiefly exposed to the wind, hid the outside walls more than half-way up with the mounds of drifted sand, over which the gable-ends of the building, with the little belfry, which was built above its eastern angle, arose in ragged and shattered nakedness of ruin.

Yet, deserted as it was, the kirk of St. Ringan still retained some semblance of the ancient homage formerly rendered there. The rude and ignorant fishermen of Dunrossness observed a practice, of which they themselves had wellnigh forgotten the origin, and from which the Protestant clergy in vain endeavoured to deter them. When their boats were in extreme peril, it was common amongst them to propose to vow an 'awmous,' as they termed it, that is, an alms, to St. Ringan; and when the danger was over, they never failed to absolve themselves of their vow by coming singly and secretly to the old church, and putting off their shoes and stockings at the entrance of the churchyard, walked thrice around the ruins, observing that they did so in the course of the sun. When the circuit was accomplished for the third time, the votary dropped his offering, usually a small silver coin, through the mullions of a lanceolated window, which opened into a side aisle, and then retired, avoiding carefully to look behind him till he was beyond the precincts which had once been hallowed ground; for it was believed that the skeleton of the saint received the offering in his bony hand, and showed his ghastly death's-head at the window in which it was thrown.

Indeed, the scene was rendered more appalling to weak and ignorant minds because the same stormy and eddying winds which, on the one side of the church, threatened to bury the ruins with sand, and had, in fact, heaped it up in huge quantities, so as almost to hide the side wall with its buttresses, seemed in other places bent on uncovering the graves of those who had been laid to their long rest on the south-eastern quarter; and, after an unusually hard gale, the coffins, and sometimes the very corpses of those who had been interred without the usual ceremonies, were discovered, in a ghastly manner, to the eyes of the living.

It was to this desolated place of worship that the elder Mertoun now proceeded, though without any of those religious or superstitious purposes with which the church of St. Ringan

was usually approached. He was totally without the superstitious fears of the country — nay, from the sequestered and sullen manner in which he lived, withdrawing himself from human society even when assembled for worship, it was the general opinion that he erred on the more fatal side, and believed rather too little than too much of that which the church receives and enjoins to Christians.

As he entered the little bay, on the shore, and almost on the beach, of which the ruins are situated, he could not help pausing for an instant, and becoming sensible that the scene, as calculated to operate on human feelings, had been selected with much judgment as the site of a religious house. In front lay the sea, into which two headlands, which formed the extremities of the bay, projected their gigantic causeways, dark and craggy rocks, on the ledges of which the gulls, and other sea-fowl appeared like flakes of snow; while the lower ranges of the cliff, stood whole lines of corn drawn up alongside of each other, like soldiers in their array, and other living thing was there none to see. The though not in a tempestuous state, was disturbed enough to rush on these capes with a sound like distant thunder, and the billows, which rose in sheets of foam half-way up these craggy rocks, formed a contrast of colouring equally striking and awful.

Betwixt the extremities, or capes, of the projecting headlands, there rolled, on the day when Merton visited the scene, a deep and dense aggregation of clouds, through which no human eye could penetrate, and which bounding the vision, and excluding all view of the distant sea, rendered it no unapt representation of the sea in the land. *Marza*, whose extent was concealed by vapours, and dark storms. The ground rising steeply from the sea-beach, permitting no view into the interior of the country, appeared a scene of irretrievable barrenness, where scrubby and stunted plants intermixed with the long bent, or coarse grass, which first covers sandy soils, were the only vegetables that could be seen. Upon a natural elevation, which rose above the beach at the very bottom of the bay, and receded a little from the sea so as to be without reach of the waves, arose the half-buried ruin which we have already described, surrounded by a wasted, half-ruinous, and mouldering wall, which, breached in several places, served still to divide the precincts of the cemetery. The mariners who were driven by accident into this solitary bay pretended that the church was occasionally observed to be full of lights, and,

from that circumstance, were used to prophesy shipwrecks and deaths by sea.

As Mertoun approached near to the chapel, he adopted, in sensibly, and perhaps without much premeditation, measures to avoid being himself seen until he came close under the walls of the burial-ground, which he approached, as it chanced, on that side where the wind was blowing from the graves in the manner we have described.

Here, looking through one of the gaps in the wall which time had made, he beheld the person whom he sought, occupied in a manner which assorted well with the ideas popularly entertained of her character, but which was otherwise sufficiently extraordinary.

She was employed beside a rude monument, on one side of which was represented the rough outline of a cavalier, or knight, on horseback, while on the other appeared a shield, with the armorial bearings so defaced as not to be intelligible: which escutcheon was suspended by one angle, contrary to the modern custom, which usually places them straight and upright. At the foot of this pillar was believed to repose, as Mertoun had formerly heard, the bones of Ribolt Troil, one of the remote ancestors of Magnus, and a man renowned for deeds of valorous enterprise in the 15th century. From the grave of this warrior Norma of the Fitful Head seemed busied in shovelling the sand, an easy task where it was so light and loose: so that it seemed plain that she would shortly complete what the rude winds had begun, and make bare the bones which lay there interred. As she laboured, she muttered her magic song: for without the Runic rhyme no form of Northern superstition was ever performed. We have perhaps preserved too many examples of these incantations; but we cannot help attempting to translate that which follows:—

'Champion, famed for warlike toil,
Art thou silent, Ribolt Troil?
Sand, and dust, and pebbly stones
Are leaving bare thy giant bones.
Who dared touch the wild bear's skin
Ye slumber'd on while life was in?
A woman now, or babe, may come,
And cast the covering from thy tomb.

Yet be not wrathful, chief, nor blight
Mine eyes or ears with sound or sight!
I come not, with unhallow'd tread,
To wake the slumbers of the dead,

Or lay thy giant relics bare,
 But what I seek thou well canst spare.
 Be it to my hand allow'd
 To shear a mark's weight from thy shroud;
 Yet leave thee sheeted lead enough
 To shield thy bones from weather rough.

See, I draw my magic knife;
 Never while thou wert in life
 Laid'st thou still for sloth or fear,
 When point and edge were glittering near;
 See, the cements now I sever.
 Waken now, or sleep for ever!
 Thou wilt not wake! the deed is done! —
 The prize I sought is fairly won.

Thanks, Ribolt, thanks; for this the sea
 Shall smooth its ruffled crest for thee,
 As! while afar its billows foam,
 Subside to peace near Ribolt's tomb.
 Thanks, Ribolt, thanks; for this the might
 Of wild winds raging at their height,
 When to thy place of slumber nigh,
 Shall soften to a lullaby.

She, the dame of doubt and dread,
 Norna of the Fitful Head,
 Mighty in her own despite,
 Miserable in her might,
 In despair and frenzy great,
 In her greatness desolate,
 Wisest, wickedest who lives,
 Well can keep the word she gives.

While Norna chanted the first part of this rhyme, she completed the task of laying bare a part of the leaden coffin of the ancient warrior, and severed from it, with much caution and apparent awe, a portion of the metal. She then reverentially threw back the sand upon the coffin; and by the time she had finished her song no trace remained that the secrets of the sepulchre had been violated.

Mertoun remained gazing on her from behind the church-yard wall during the whole ceremony, not from any impression of veneration for her or her employment, but because he conceived that to interrupt a madwoman in her act of madness was not the best way to obtain from her such intelligence as she might have to impart. Meanwhile, he had full time to consider her figure, although her face was obscured by her dishevelled hair and by the hood of her dark mantle, which permitted no more to be visible than a Druidess would probably

have exhibited at the celebration of her mystical rites. Mertoun had often heard of Norna before ; nay, it is most probable that he might have seen her repeatedly, for she had been in the vicinity of Jarlshof more than once since his residence there. But the absurd stories which were in circulation respecting her prevented his paying any attention to a person whom he regarded as either an impostor or a madwoman, or a compound of both. Yet, now that his attention was by circumstances involuntarily fixed upon her person and deportment, he could not help acknowledging to himself that she was either a complete enthusiast or rehearsed her part so admirably that no pythoness of ancient times could have excelled her. The dignity and solemnity of her gesture, the sonorous, yet impressive, tone of voice with which she addressed the departed spirit whose mortal relics she ventured to disturb, were such as failed not to make an impression upon him, careless and indifferent as he generally appeared to all that went on around him. But no sooner was her singular occupation terminated than, entering the churchyard with some difficulty by clambering over the disjointed ruins of the wall, he made Norna aware of his presence. Far from starting or expressing the least surprise at his appearance in a place so solitary, she said, in a tone that seemed to intimate that he had been expected, 'So — you have sought me at last !'

'And found you,' replied Mertoun, judging he would best introduce the inquiries he had to make by assuming a tone which corresponded to her own.

'Yes !' she replied, 'found me you have, and in the place where all men must meet — amid the tabernacles of the dead.'

'Here we must, indeed, meet at last,' replied Mertoun, glancing his eyes on the desolate scene around, where headstones, half-covered in sand, and others, from which the same wind had stripped the soil on which they rested, covered with inscriptions, and sculptured with emblems of mortality, were the most conspicuous objects — 'here, as in the house of death, all men must meet at length ; and happy those that come soonest to the quiet haven.'

'He that dares desire this haven,' said Norna, 'must have steered a steady course in the voyage of life. I dare not hope for such quiet harbour. Darest *thou* expect it ? or has the course thou hast kept deserved it ?'

'It matters not to my present purpose,' replied Mertoun ;

'I have to ask you what tidings you know of my son, Mordaunt Mertoun?'

'A father,' replied the sibyl, 'asks of a stranger what tidings she has of his son! How should I know aught of him? The cormorant says not to the mallard, "Where is my brood?"'

'Lay aside this useless affectation of mystery,' said Mertoun: 'with the vulgar and ignorant it has its effect, but upon me it is thrown away. The people of Jarlshof have told me that you do know, or may know, something of Mordaunt Mertoun, who has not returned home from the festival of St. John's, held in the house of your relative, Magnus Troil. Give me such information, if indeed ye have it to give; and it shall be recompensed, if the means of recompense are in my power.'

'The wide round of earth,' replied Norna, 'holds nothing that I would call a recompense for the slightest word that I throw away upon a living ear. But for thy son, if thou wouldst see him in life, repair to the approaching fair of Kirkwall, in Orkney.'

'And wherefore thither?' said Mertoun; 'I know he had no purpose in that direction.'

'We drive on the stream of fate,' answered Norna, 'without oar or rudder. You had no purpose this morning of visiting the kirk of St. Ringan, yet you are here; you had no purpose but a minute hence of being at Kirkwall, and yet you will go thither.'

'Not unless the cause is more distinctly explained to me. I am no believer, dame, in those who assert your supernatural powers.'

'You shall believe in them ere we part,' said Norna. 'As yet you know but little of me, nor shall you know more. But I know enough of you, and could convince you with one word that I do so.'

'Convince me, then,' said Mertoun; 'for, unless I am so convinced, there is little chance of my following your counsel.'

'Mark, then,' said Norna, 'what I have to say on your son's score, else what I shall say to you on your own will banish every other thought from your memory. You shall go to the approaching fair at Kirkwall; and on the fifth day of the fair you shall walk, at the hour of noon, in the outer aisle of the cathedral of St. Magnus, and there you shall meet a person who will give you tidings of your son.'

'You must speak more distinctly, dame,' returned Mertoun, scornfully, 'if you hope that I shall follow your counsel. I

have been fooled in my time by women, but never so grossly as you seem willing to gull me.'

'Hearken, then!' said the old woman. 'The word which I speak shall touch the nearest secret of thy life, and thrill thee through nerve and bone.'

So saying, she whispered a word into Mertoun's ear, the effect of which seemed almost magical. He remained fixed and motionless with surprise, as, waving her arm slowly aloft, with an air of superiority and triumph, Norna glided from him, turned round a corner of the ruins, and was soon out of sight.

Mertoun offered not to follow or to trace her. 'We fly from our fate in vain!' he said, as he began to recover himself; and turning, he left behind him the desolate ruins with their cemetery. As he looked back from the very last point at which the church was visible, he saw the figure of Norna, muffled in her mantle, standing on the very summit of the ruined tower, and stretching out to the sea-breeze something which resembled a white pennon, or flag. A feeling of horror, similar to that excited by her last words, again thrilled through his bosom, and he hastened onwards with unwonted speed, until he had left the church of St. Ninian, with its bay of sand, far behind him.

Upon his arrival at Jarlshof, the alteration in his countenance was so great that Swertha conjectured he was about to fall into one of those fits of deep melancholy which she termed his dark hour.

'And what better could be expected,' thought Swertha, 'when he must needs go visit Norna of the Fitful Head when she was in the haunted kirk of St. Ringan's?'

But, without testifying any other symptoms of an alienated mind than that of deep and sullen dejection, her master acquainted her with his intention to go to the fair of Kirkwall—a thing so contrary to his usual habits that the house-keeper wellnigh refused to credit her ears. Shortly after he heard, with apparent indifference, the accounts returned by the different persons who had been sent out in quest of Mordaunt, by sea and land, who all of them returned without any tidings. The equanimity with which Mertoun heard the report of their bad success convinced Swertha still more firmly that, in his interview with Norna, that issue had been predicted to him by the sibyl whom he had consulted.

The township were yet more surprised when their tacksman, Mr. Mertoun, as if on some sudden resolution, made preparations

to visit Kirkwall during the fair, although he had hitherto avoided sedulously all such places of public resort. Swertha puzzled herself a good deal, without being able to penetrate this mystery; and vexed herself still more concerning the fate of her young master. But her concern was much softened by the deposit of a sum of money, seeming, however moderate in itself, a treasure in her eyes, which her master put into her hands, acquainting her at the same time that he had taken his passage for Kirkwall in a small bark belonging to the proprietor of the island of Mousa.

CHAPTER XXVI

Nae langer she wept, her tears were a' spent ;
Despair it was come, and she thought it content ;
She thought it content, but her cheek it grew pale,
And she droop'd, like a lily broke down by the hail.¹

Continuation of Auld Robin Gray.

THE condition of Minna much resembled that of the village heroine in Lady Ann Lindsay's beautiful ballad. Her natural firmness of mind prevented her from sinking under the pressure of the horrible secret, which haunted her while awake, and was yet more tormenting during her broken and hurried slumbers. There is no grief so dreadful as that which we dare not communicate, and in which we can neither ask nor desire sympathy ; and when to this is added the burden of a guilty mystery to an innocent bosom, there is little wonder that Minna's health should have sunk under the burden.

To the friends around, her habits and manners, nay, her temper, seemed altered to such an extraordinary degree that it is no wonder that some should have ascribed the change to witchcraft, and some to incipient madness. She became unable to bear the solitude in which she formerly delighted to spend her time ; yet, when she hurried into society, it was without either joining in, or attending to, what passed. Generally she appeared wrapped in sad, and even sullen, abstraction, until her attention was suddenly roused by some casual mention of the name of Cleveland or of Mordaunt Mertoun, at which she started, with the horror of one who sees the lighted match applied to a charged mine, and expects to be instantly involved in the effects of the explosion. And when she observed that the discovery was not yet made, it was so far from being a consolation, that she almost wished the worst were known, rather than endure the continued agonies of suspense.

Her conduct towards her sister was so variable, yet uniformly so painful to the kind-hearted Brenda, that it seemed to

¹ See Motto to Chap. xxvi. Note 32.

all around one of the strongest features of her malady. Sometimes Minna was impelled to seek her sister's company, as if by the consciousness that they were common sufferers by a misfortune of which she herself alone could grasp the extent; and then suddenly the feeling of the injury which Brenda had received through the supposed agency of Cleveland made her unable to bear her presence, and still less to endure the consolation which her sister, mistaking the nature of her malady, vainly endeavoured to administer. Frequently, also, did it happen that, while Brenda was imploring her sister to take comfort, she incautiously touched upon some subject which thrilled to the very centre of her soul; so that, unable to conceal her agony, Minna would rush hastily from the apartment. All these different moods, though they too much resembled, to one who knew not their real source, the caprices of unkind estrangement, Brenda endured with such prevailing and unruffled gentleness of disposition that Minna was frequently moved to shed floods of tears upon her neck; and, perhaps, the moments in which she did so, though imbittered by the recollection that her fatal secret concerned the destruction of Brenda's happiness as well as her own, were still, softened as they were by sisterly affection, the most endurable moments of this most miserable period of her life.

The effects of the alternations of moping melancholy, fearful agitation, and bursts of nervous feeling were soon visible on the poor young woman's face and person. She became pale and emaciated; her eye lost the steady, quiet look of happiness and innocence, and was alternately dim and wild, as she was acted upon by a general feeling of her own distressful condition, or by some quicker and more poignant sense of agony. Her very features seemed to change, and become sharp and eager, and her voice, which, in its ordinary tones, was low and placid, now sometimes sunk in indistinct mutterings, and sometimes was raised beyond the natural key, in hasty and abrupt exclamations. When in company with others, she was sullenly silent, and, when she ventured into solitude, was observed (for it was now thought very proper to watch her on such occasions) to speak much to herself.

The pharmacy of the islands was in vain resorted to by Minna's anxious father. Sages of both sexes, who knew the virtues of every herb which drinks the dew, and augmented these virtues by words of might, used while they prepared and applied the medicines, were attended with no benefit; and

Magnus, in the utmost anxiety, was at last induced to have recourse to the advice of his kinswoman, Norna of the Fitful Head, although, owing to circumstances noticed in the course of the story, there was at this time some estrangement between them. His first application was in vain. Norna was then at her usual place of residence upon the sea-coast, near the head-land from which she usually took her designation ; but, although Eric Scambester himself brought the message, she refused positively to see him or return any answer.

Magnus was angry at the slight put upon his messenger and message ; but his anxiety on Minna's account, as well as the respect which he had for Norna's real misfortunes and imputed wisdom and power, prevented him from indulging, on the present occasion, his usual irritability of disposition. On the contrary, he determined to make an application to his kinswoman in his own person. He kept his purpose, however, to himself, and only desired his daughters to be in readiness to attend him upon a visit to a relation whom he had not seen for some time, and directed them, at the same time, to carry some provisions along with them, as the journey was distant, and they might perhaps find their friend unprovided.

Unaccustomed to ask explanations of his pleasure, and hoping that exercise and the amusement of such an excursion might be of service to her sister, Brenda, upon whom all household and family charges now devolved, caused the necessary preparations to be made for the expedition ; and, on the next morning, they were engaged in tracing the long and tedious course of beach and of moorland which, only varied by occasional patches of oats and barley, where a little ground had been selected for cultivation, divided Burgh-Westra from the north-western extremity of the Mainland (as the principal island is called), which terminates in the cape called Fitful Head, as the south-western point ends in the cape of Sumburgh.

On they went, through wild and over wold, the Udaller bestriding a strong, square-made, well-barrelled palfrey, of Norwegian breed, somewhat taller, and yet as stout, as the ordinary ponies of the country ; while Minna and Brenda, famed, amongst other accomplishments, for their horsemanship, rode two of those hardy animals, which, bred and reared with more pains than is usually bestowed, showed, both by the neatness of their form and their activity, that the race, so much and so carelessly neglected, is capable of being improved into beauty without losing anything of its spirit or vigour. They were

attended by two servants on horseback and two on foot, secure that the last circumstance would be no delay to their journey, because a great part of the way was so rugged, or so marshy, that the horses could only move at a foot-pace; and that, whenever they met with any considerable tract of hard and even ground, they had only to borrow from the nearest herd of ponies the use of a couple for the accommodation of these pedestrians.

The journey was a melancholy one, and little conversation passed, except when the Udaller, pressed by impatience and vexation, urged his pony to a quick pace, and again, recollecting Minna's weak state of health, slackened to a walk, and reiterated inquiries how she felt herself, and whether the fatigue was not too much for her. At noon the party halted and partook of some refreshment, for which they had made ample provision, beside a pleasant spring, the pureness of whose waters, however, did not suit the Udaller's palate, until qualified by a liberal addition of right Nantz. After he had a second, yea, and a third, time filled a large silver travelling-cup, embossed with a German Cupid smoking a pipe and a German Bacchus emptying his flask down the throat of a bear, he began to become more talkative than vexation had permitted him to be during the early part of their journey, and thus addressed his daughters:

'Well, children, we are within a league or two of Norna's dwelling, and we shall soon see how the old spell-mutterer will receive us.'

Minna interrupted her father with a faint exclamation, while Brenda, surprised to a great degree, exclaimed, 'Is it then to Norna that we are to make this visit? Heaven forbid!'

'And wherefore should Heaven forbid?' said the Udaller, knitting his brows; 'wherefore, I would gladly know, should Heaven forbid me to visit my kinswoman, whose skill may be of use to your sister, if any woman in Zetland, or man either, can be of service to her? You are a fool, Brenda; your sister has more sense. Cheer up, Minna! thou wert ever wont to like her songs and stories, and used to hang about her neck, when little Brenda cried and ran from her like a Spanish mer chantman from a Dutch caper.'¹

'I wish she may not frighten me as much to-day, father,' replied Brenda, desirous of indulging Minna in her taciturnity, and at the same time to amuse her father by sustaining the

¹ A light-armed vessel of the seventeenth century, adapted for privateering, and much used by the Dutch.

conversation : 'I have heard so much of her dwelling, that I am rather alarmed at the thought of going there uninvited.'

'Thou art a fool,' said Magnua, 'to think that a visit from her kinsfolks can ever come amiss to a kind, hearty, Hialtland heart like my cousin Norna's. And, now I think on 't, I will be sworn that is the reason why she would not receive Eric Scambester! It is many a long day since I have seen her chimney smoke, and I have never carried you thither. She hath indeed some right to call me unkind. But I will tell her the truth; and that is, that, though such be the fashion, I do not think it is fair or honest to eat up the substance of lone women-folks, as we do that of our brother udallers, when we roll about from house to house in the winter season, until we gather like a snowball, and eat up all wherever we come.'

'There is no fear of our putting Norna to any distress just now,' replied Brenda, 'for I have ample provision of everything that we can possibly need — fish, and bacon, and salted mutton, and dried geese — more than we could eat in a week, besides enough of liquor for you, father.'

'Right — right, my girl!' said the Udaller: 'a well-found ship makes a merry voyage; so we shall only want the kindness of Norna's roof and a little bedding for you; for, as to myself, my sea-cloak and honest dry boards of Norway deal suit me better than your eider-down cushions and mattresses. So that Norna will have the pleasure of seeing us without having a stiver's worth of trouble.'

'I wish she may think it a pleasure, sir,' replied Brenda.

'Why, what does the girl mean, in the name of the Martyr?' replied Magnus Troil; 'dost thou think my kinsman is a heathen, who will not rejoice to see her own flesh and blood? I would I were as sure of a good year's fishing! No — no! I only fear we may find her from home at present, for she is often a wanderer, and all with thinking over much on what can never be helped.'

Minna sighed deeply as her father spoke, and the Udaller went on:

'Dost thou sigh at that, my girl? Why, 't is the fault of half the world; let it never be thine own, Minna.'

Another suppressed sigh intimated that the caution came too late.

'I believe you are afraid of my cousin as well as Brenda is,' said the Udaller, gazing on her pale countenance; 'if so, speak the word, and we will return back again as if we

had the wind on our quarter, and were running fifteen knots by the line.'

'Do, for Heaven's sake, sister, let us return!' said Brenda, imploringly; 'you know — you remember — you must be well aware that Norna can do nought to help you.'

'It is but too true,' said Minna, in a subdued voice; 'but I know not — she may answer a question — a question that only the miserable dare ask of the miserable.'

'Nay, my kinswoman is no miser,' answered the Udaller, who only heard the beginning of the word. 'A good income she has, both in Orkney and here, and many a fair hispund of butter is paid to her. But the poor have the best share of it, and shame fall the Zetlander who begrudges them; the rest she spends, I wot not how, in her journeys through the islands. But you will laugh to see her house, and Nick Strumpfer, whom she calls Pacolet. Many folks think Nick is the devil; but he is flesh and blood, like any of us — his father lived in Graemsay. I shall be glad to see Nick again.'

While the Udaller thus ran on, Brenda, who, in recompense for a less portion of imagination than her sister, was gifted with sound common sense, was debating with herself the probable effect of this visit on her sister's health. She came finally to the resolution of speaking with her father aside, upon the first occasion which their journey should afford. To him she determined to communicate the whole particulars of their nocturnal interview with Norna, to which, among other agitating causes, she attributed the depression of Minna's spirits, and then make himself the judge whether he ought to persist in his visit to a person so singular, and expose his daughter to all the shock which her nerves might possibly receive from the interview.

Just as she had arrived at this conclusion, her father, dashing the crumbs from his laced waistcoat with one hand and receiving with the other a fourth cup of brandy and water, drank devoutly to the success of their voyage, and ordered all to be in readiness to set forward. Whilst they were saddling their ponies, Brenda, with some difficulty, contrived to make her father understand she wished to speak with him in private — no small surprise to the honest Udaller, who, though secret as the grave in the very few things where he considered secrecy as of importance, was so far from practising mystery in general, that his most important affairs were often discussed by him openly in presence of his whole family, servants included.

But far greater was his astonishment when, remaining pur-

posely with his daughter, Brenda, a little in the wake, as he termed it, of the other riders, he heard the whole account of Norna's visit to Burgh-Westra, and of the communication with which she had then astounded his daughters. For a long time he could utter nothing but interjections, and ended with a thousand curses on his kinswoman's folly in telling his daughters such a history of horror.

'I have often heard,' said the Udaller, 'that she was quite mad, with all her wisdom and all her knowledge of the seasons; and, by the bones of my namesake the Martyr, I begin now to believe it most assuredly! I know no more how to steer than if I had lost my compass. Had I known this before we set out, I think I had remained at home; but now that we have come so far, and that Norna expects us —'

'Expects us, father!' said Brenda; 'how can that be possible?'

'Why, that I know not; but she that can tell how the wind is to blow can tell which way we are designing to ride. She must not be provoked; perhaps she has done my family this ill for the words I had with her about that lad Mordaunt Mertoun, and if so, she can undo it again; and so she shall, or I will know the cause wherefore. But I will try fair words first.'

Finding it thus settled that they were to go forward, Brenda endeavoured next to learn from her father whether Norna's tale was founded in reality. He shook his head, groaned bitterly, and, in a few words, acknowledged that the whole, so far as concerned her intrigue with a stranger and her father's death, of which she became the accidental and most innocent cause, was a matter of sad and indisputable truth. 'For her infant,' he said, 'he could never, by any means, learn what became of it.'

'Her infant!' exclaimed Brenda; 'she spoke not a word of her infant!'

'Then I wish my tongue had been blistered,' said the Udaller, 'when I told you of it! I see that, young and old, a man has no better chance of keeping a secret from you women than an eel to keep himself in his hold when he is sniggled with a loop of horse-hair: sooner or later the fisher teases him out of his hole, when he has once the noose round his neck.'

'But the infant, my father,' said Brenda, still insisting on the particulars of this extraordinary story, 'what became of it?'

'Carried off, I fancy, by the blackguard Vaughan,' answered the Udaller, with a gruff accent, which plainly betokened how weary he was of the subject.

'By Vaughan!' said Brenda, 'the lover of poor Norna doubtless! What sort of man was he, father?'

'Why, much like other men, I fancy,' answered the Udaller. 'I never saw him in my life. He kept company with the Scottish families at Kirkwall, and I with the good old Norse folk. Ah! if Norna had dwelt always amongst her own kin, and not kept company with her Scottish acquaintance, she would have known nothing of Vaughan, and things might have been otherwise. But then I should have known nothing of your blessed mother, Brenda; and that,' he said, his large blue eyes shining with a tear, 'would have saved me a short joy and a long sorrow.'

Norna could but ill have supplied my mother's place to you, father, as a companion and a friend — that is, judging from all I have heard,' said Brenda, with some hesitation.

But Magnus, softened by recollections of his beloved wife, answered her with more indulgence than she expected. 'I would have been content,' he said, 'to have wedded Norna at that time. It would have been the soldering of an old quarrel — the healing of an old sore. All our blood relations wished it, and, situated as I was, especially not having seen your blessed mother, I had little will to oppose their counsels. You must not judge of Norna or of me by such an appearance as we now present to you. She was young and beautiful, and I game-some as a Highland buck, and little caring what haven I made for, having, as I thought, more than one under my lee. But Norna preferred this man Vaughan, and, as I told you before, it was, perhaps, the best kindness she could have done to me.'

'Ah, poor kinswoman!' said Brenda. 'But believe you, father, in the high powers which she claims — in the mysterious vision of the dwarf — in the —'

She was interrupted in these questions by Magnus, to whom they were obviously displeasing.

'I believe, Brenda,' he said, 'according to the belief of my forefathers. I pretend not to be a wiser man than they were in their time; and they all believed that, in cases of great worldly distress, Providence opened the eyes of the mind —' 'afforded the sufferers a vision of futurity. It was but a trimming of the boat, with reverence' — here he touched his hat reverentially; 'and, after all the shifting of ballast, poor Norna is as heavily loaded in the bows as ever was an Orkneyman's yawl at the dog-fishing: she has more than affliction enough on board to balance whatever gifts she may have had in the midst

of her calamity. They are as painful to her, poor soul, as a crown of thorns would be to her brow, though it were the badge of the empire of Denmark. And do not you, Brenda, seek to be wiser than your fathers. Your sister Minna, before she was so ill, had as much reverence for whatever was produced in Norse as if it had been in the Pope's bull, which is all written in pure Latin.'

'Poor Norna!' repeated Brenda; 'and her child — was it never recovered?'

'What do I know of her child,' said the Udaller, more gruffly than before, 'except that she was very ill, both before and after the birth, though we kept her as merry as we could with pipe and harp, and so forth. The child had come before its time into this bustling world, so it is likely it has been long dead. But you know nothing of all these matters, Brenda; so get along for a foolish girl, and ask no more questions about what it does not become you to inquire into.'

So saying, the Udaller gave his sturdy little palfrey the spur, and cantering forward over rough and smooth, while the pony's accuracy and firmness of step put all difficulties of the path at secure defiance, he placed himself soon by the side of the melancholy Minna, and permitted her sister to have no farther share in his conversation than as it was addressed to them jointly. She could but comfort herself with the hope that, as Minna's disease appeared to have its seat in the imagination, the remedies recommended by Norna might have some chance of being effectual, since, in all probability, they would be addressed to the same faculty.

Their way had hitherto held chiefly over moss and moor, varied occasionally by the necessity of making a circuit around the heads of those long lagoons, called voes, which run up into and indent the country in such a manner that, though the Mainland of Zetland may be thirty miles or more in length, there is, perhaps, no part of it which is more than three miles distant from the salt water. But they had now approached the north-western extremity of the isle, and travelled along the top of an immense ridge of rocks, which had for ages withstood the rage of the Northern Ocean, and of all the winds by which it is buffeted.

At length exclaimed Magnus to his daughters, 'There is Norna's dwelling! Look up, Minna, my love; for if this does not make you laugh, nothing will. Saw you ever anything but an osprey that would have made such a nest for herself as

that is? By my namesake's bones, there is not the like of it that living thing ever dwelt in, having no wings and the use of reason, unless it chanced to be the Frawa Stack¹ off Papa, where the king's daughter of Norway was shut up to keep her from her lovers; and all to little purpose, if the tale be true: for, maidens, I would have you to wot that it is hard to keep flax from the lowe.

¹ See Note 33.

CHAPTER XXVII

Thrice from the cavern's darksome womb
Her groaning voice arose ;
And come, my daughter, fearless come,
And fearless tell thy woes !

MEIKLE.

THE dwelling of Norna, though none but a native of Zetland, familiar, during his whole life, with every variety of rock-scenery, could have seen anything ludicrous in this situation, was not unaptly compared by Magnus Troil to the eyrie of the osprey, or sea-eagle. It was very small, and had been fabricated out of one of those dens which are called burghs¹ and Pictshouses in Zetland, and duns on the mainland of Scotland and the Hebrides, and which seem to be the first effort at architecture — the connecting-link betwixt a fox's hole in a cairn of loose stones and an attempt to construct a human habitation out of the same materials, without the use of lime or cement of any kind ; without any timber, so far as can be seen from their remains ; without any knowledge of the arch or of the stair. Such as they are, however, the numerous remains of these dwellings — for there is one found on every headland, islet, or point of vantage which could afford the inhabitants additional means of defence — tend to prove that the remote people by whom these burghs were constructed were a numerous race, and that the islands had then a much greater population than, from other circumstances, we might have been led to anticipate.

The burgh of which we at present speak had been altered and repaired at a later period, probably by some petty despot, or sea-rover, who, tempted by the security of the situation, which occupied the whole of a projecting point of rock, and was divided from the mainland by a rent or chasm of some depth, had built some additions to it in the rudest style of Gothic

¹ See Note 34.

defensive architecture; had plastered the inside with lime and clay, and broken out windows for the admission of light and air; and, finally, by roofing it over, and dividing it into stories, by means of beams of wreck-wood, had converted the whole into a tower, resembling a pyramidical dovecot, formed by a double wall, still containing within its thickness that set of circular galleries, or concentric rings, which is proper to all the forts of this primitive construction, and which seem to have constituted the only shelter which they were originally qualified to afford to their shivering inhabitants.

This singular habitation, built out of the loose stones which lay scattered around, and exposed for ages to the vicissitudes of the elements, was as grey, weather-beaten, and wasted as the rock on which it was founded, and from which it could not easily be distinguished, so completely did it resemble in colour, and so little did it differ in regularity of shape, from a pinnacle or fragment of the cliff.

Minna's habitual indifference to all that of late had passed around her was for a moment suspended by the sight of an abode which, at another and happier period of her life, would have attracted at once her curiosity and her wonder. Even now she seemed to feel interest as she gazed upon this singular retreat, and recollected it was that of certain misery and probable insanity, connected, as its inhabitant asserted, and Minna's faith admitted, with power over the elements and the capacity of intercourse with the invisible world.

'Our kinswoman,' she muttered, 'has chosen her dwelling well, with no more of earth than a sea-fowl might rest upon, and all around sightless tempests and raging waves. Despair and magical power could not have a fitter residence.'

Brenda, on the other hand, shuddered when she looked on the dwelling to which they were advancing, by a difficult, dangerous, and precarious path, which sometimes, to her great terror, approached to the verge of the precipice; so that, Zetlander as she was, and confident as she had reason to be, in the steadiness and sagacity of the sure-footed pony, she could scarce suppress an inclination to giddiness, especially at one point, when, being foremost of the party, and turning a sharp angle of the rock, her feet, as they projected from the side of the pony, hung for an instant sheer over the ledge of the precipice, so that there was nothing save empty space betwixt the sole of her shoe and the white foam of the vexed ocean, which dashed, howled, and foamed five hundred feet below. What

would have driven a maiden of another country into delirium gave her but a momentary uneasiness, which was instantly lost in the hope that the impression which the scene appeared to make on her sister's imagination might be favourable to her cure.

She could not help looking back to see how Minna should pass the point of peril which she herself had just rounded; and could hear the strong voice of the Udaller, though to him such rough paths were familiar as the smooth sea-beach, call, in a tone of some anxiety, 'Take heed, jarto,'¹ as Minna, with an eager look, dropped her bridle, and stretched forward her arms, and even her body, over the precipice, in the attitude of the wild swan, when, balancing itself and spreading its broad pinions, it prepares to launch from the cliff on the bosom of the winds. Brenda felt at that instant a pang of unutterable terror, which left a strong impression on her nerves, even when relieved, as it instantly was, by her sister recovering herself and sitting upright on her saddle, the opportunity and temptation (if she felt it) passing away, as the quiet, steady animal which supported her rounded the projecting angle, and turned its patient and firm step from the verge of the precipice.

They now attained a more level and open space of ground, being the flat top of an isthmus of projecting rock, narrowing again towards a point where it was terminated by the chasm which separated the small peak, or 'stack,' occupied by Norna's habitation, from the main ridge of cliff and precipice. This natural fosse, which seemed to have been the work of some convulsive nature, was deep, dark, and irregular, narrower towards the bottom, which could not be distinctly seen, and widest at the top, having the appearance as if that part of the cliff occupied by the building had been half rent away from the isthmus which it terminated — an idea favoured by the angle at which it seemed to recede from the land and lean towards the sea, with the building which crowned it.

This angle of projection was so considerable, that it required recollection to dispel the idea that the rock, so much removed from the perpendicular, was about to precipitate itself seaward, with its crenellated tower; and a timorous person would have been afraid to put foot upon it, lest an addition of weight so inconsiderable as that of the human body should hasten a catastrophe which seemed at every instant impending.

Without troubling himself about such fantasies, the Udaller rode towards the tower, and there dismounting, along with his

¹ *Jarto* — my dear.

daughters, gave the ponies in charge to one of their domestics, with directions to disencumber them of their burdens and turn them out for rest and refreshment upon the nearest heath. This done, they approached the gate, which seemed formerly to have been connected with the land by a rude drawbridge, some of the apparatus of which was still visible. But the rest had been long demolished, and was replaced by a stationary footbridge, formed of barrel-staves covered with turf, very narrow and ledgeless, and supported by a sort of arch, constructed out of the jaw-bones of the whale. Along this 'brigg of dread' the Udaller stepped with his usual portly majesty of stride, which threatened its demolition and his own at the same time; his daughters trode more lightly and more safely after him, and the whole party stood before the low and rugged portal of Norna's habitation.

'If she should be abroad after all,' said Magnus, as he plied the black oaken door with repeated blows; 'but if so, we will at least lie by a day for her return, and make Nick Strumpfer pay the demurrage in bland and brandy.'

As he spoke, the door opened and displayed, to the alarm of Brenda, and the surprise of Minna herself, a square-made dwarf, about four feet five inches high, with a head of most portentous size, and features correspondent — namely, a huge mouth, a tremendous nose, with large black nostrils, which seemed to have been slit upwards, blubber lips of an unconscionable size, and huge wall-eyes, with which he leered, sneered, grinned, and goggled on the Udaller as an old acquaintance, without uttering a single word. The young women could hardly persuade themselves that they did not see before their eyes the very demon Trolld who made such a distinguished figure in Norna's legend. Their father went on addressing this uncouth apparition in terms of such condescending friendship as the better sort apply to their inferiors when they wish, for any immediate purpose, to conciliate or coax them — a tone, by the by, which generally contains, in its very familiarity, as much offence as the more direct assumption of distance and superiority.

'Ha, Nick! — honest Nick!' said the Udaller, 'here you are, lively and lovely as St. Nicholas, your namesake, when he is carved with an axe for the head-piece of a Dutch dogger. How dost thou do, Nick, or Pacolet, if you like that better? Nicholas, here are my two daughters, nearly as handsome as thyself, thou seest.'

Nick grinned, and did a clumsy obeisance by way of

courtesy, but kept his broad, misshapen person firmly placed in the doorway.

'Daughters,' continued the Udaller, who seemed to have his reasons for speaking. This Cerberus fair, at least according to his own notions of propitiation — 'this is Nick Strumpfer, maidens, whom his mistress calls Pacolet, being a light-limbed dwarf, as you see, like him that wont to fly about, like a scourie, on his wooden hobby-horse, in the old story-book of *Valentine and Orson*, that you, Minna, used to read whast you were a child. I assure you he can keep his mistress's counsel, and never told one of her secrets in his life — ha, ha, ha!'

The ugly dwarf grinned ten times wider than before, and showed the meaning of the Udaller's jest by opening his immense jaws and throwing back his head, so as to discover that, in the immense cavity of his mouth, there only remained the small shrivelled remnant of a tongue, capable, perhaps, of assisting him in swallowing his food, but unequal to the formation of articulate sounds. Whether this organ had been curtailed by cruelty or injured by disease it was impossible to guess; but that the unfortunate being had not been originally dumb was evident from his retaining the sense of hearing. Having made this horrible exhibition, he repaid the Udaller's mirth with a loud, horrid, and discordant laugh, which had something in it the more hideous that his mirth seemed to be excited by his own misery. The sisters looked on each other in silence and fear, and even the Udaller appeared disconcerted.

'And how now?' he proceeded, after a minute's pause. 'When didst thou wash that throat of thine, that is about the width of the Pentland Firth, with a cup of brandy? Ha, Nick! I have that with me which is sound stuff, boy — ha!'

The dwarf bent his beetle brows, shook his misshapen head, and made a quick, sharp indication, throwing his right hand up to his shoulder with the thumb pointed backwards.

'What! my kinswoman,' said the Udaller, comprehending the signal, 'will be angry? Well, shalt have a flask to carouse when she is from home, old acquaintance: lips and throats may swallow though they cannot speak.'

Pacolet grinned a grim assent.

'And now,' said the Udaller, 'stand out of the way, Pacolet, and let me carry my daughters to see their kinswoman. By the bones of St. Magnus, it shall be a good turn in thy way! Nay, never shake thy head, man; for if thy mistress be at home, see her we will.'

The dwarf again intimated the impossibility of their being admitted, partly by signs, partly by mumbling some uncouth and most disagreeable sounds, and the Udaller's mood began to arise.

'Tittle tattle, man!' said he; 'trouble not me with thy gibberish, but stand out of the way, and the blame, if there be any, shall rest with me.'

So saying, Magnus Troil laid his sturdy hand upon the collar of the recusant dwarf's jacket of blue wadmaal, and with a strong, but not a violent, grasp removed him from the doorway, pushed him gently aside, and entered, followed by his two daughters, whom a sense of apprehension, arising out of all which they saw and heard, kept very close to him. A crooked and dusty passage through which Magnus led the way was dimly enlightened by a shot-hole communicating with the interior of the building, and originally intended, doubtless, to command the entrance by a hagbut or culverin. As they approached nearer, for they walked slowly and with hesitation, the light, imperfect as it was, was suddenly obscured; and, on looking upward to discern the cause, Brenda was startled to observe the pale and obscurely-seen countenance of Norna gazing downward upon them, without speaking a word. There was nothing extraordinary in this, as the mistress of the mansion might be naturally enough looking out to see what guests were thus suddenly and unceremoniously intruding themselves on her presence. Still, however, the natural paleness of her features, exaggerated by the light in which they were at present exhibited; the immovable sternness of her look, which showed neither kindness nor courtesy of civil reception; her dead silence; and the singular appearance of everything about her dwelling, augmented the dismay which Brenda had already conceived. Magnus Troil and Minna had walked slowly forward, without observing the apparition of their singular hostess.

CHAPTER XXVIII

The witch then raised her wither'd arm,
And waved her wand on high,
And, while she spoke the mutter'd charm,
Dark lightning fill'd her eye.

MEIKLE.

'THIS should be the stair,' said the Udaller, blundering in the dark against some steps of irregular ascent -- 'this should be the stair, unless my memory greatly fail me; ay, and there she sits,' he added, pausing at a half-open door, 'with all her tackle about her as usual, and as busy, doubtless, as the devil in a gale of wind.'

As he made this irreverent comparison, he entered, followed by his daughters, the darkened apartment in which Norna was seated, amidst a confused collection of books of various languages, parchment scrolls, tablets and stones inscribed with the straight and angular characters of the Runic alphabet, and similar articles, which the vulgar might have connected with the exercise of the forbidden arts. There were also lying in the chamber, or hung over the rude and ill-contrived chimney, an old shirt of mail, with the head-piece, battle-axe, and lance which had once belonged to it; and on a shelf were disposed, in great order, several of those curious stone axes, formed of green granite, which are often found in those islands, where they are called thunderbolts by the common people, who usually preserve them as a charm of security against the effects of lightning. There was, moreover, to be seen amid the strange collection a stone sacrificial knife, used perhaps for immolating human victims, and one or two of the brazen implements called celts, the purpose of which has troubled the repose of so many antiquaries. A variety of other articles, some of which had neither name nor were capable of description, lay in confusion about the apartment; and in one corner, on a quantity of withered sea-weed, reposed what seemed, at first view, to be

a large, unshapely dog, but, when seen more closely, proved to be a tame seal, which it had been Norna's amusement to domesticate.

This uncouth favourite bristled up in its corner, upon the arrival of so many strangers, with an alertness similar to that which a terrestrial dog would have displayed on a similar occasion; but Norna remained motionless, seated behind a table of rough granite, propped up by misshapen feet of the same material, which, besides the old book with which she seemed to be busied, sustained a cake of the coarse unleavened bread, three parts oatmeal and one the sawdust of fir, which is used by the poor peasants of Norway, beside which stood a jar of water.

Magnus Troil remained a minute in silence gazing upon his kinswoman, while the singularity of her mansion inspired Brenda with much fear, and changed, though but for a moment, the melancholy and abstracted mood of Minna into a feeling of interest not unmixed with awe. The silence was interrupted by the Udaller, who, unwilling on the one hand to give his kinswoman offence, and desirous on the other to show that he was not daunted by a reception so singular, opened the conversation thus :

'I give you good e'en, cousin Norna; my daughters and I have come far to see you.'

Norna raised her eyes from her volume, looked full at her visitors, then let them quietly sink down on the leaf with which she seemed to be engaged.

'Nay, cousin,' said Magnus, 'take your own time: our business with you can wait your leisure. See here, Minna, what a fair prospect here is of the cape, scarce a quarter of a mile off; you may see the billows breaking on it topmast high. Our kinswoman has got a pretty seal, too. Here, sealchie, my man, whew, whew!'

The seal took no further notice of the Udaller's advances to acquaintance than by uttering a low growl.

'He is not so well trained,' continued the Udaller, affecting an air of ease and unconcern, 'as Peter MacRaw's,¹ the old piper of Stornoway, who had a seal that flapped its tail to the tune of "Caberfae," and acknowledged no other whatever. Well, cousin,' he concluded, observing that Norna closed her book, 'are you going to give us a welcome at last, or must we go farther than our blood relation's house to seek one, and that when the evening is wearing late apace?'

¹ See Note 35.

'Ye dull and hard-hearted generation, as deaf as the adder to the voice of the charmer,' answered Norna, addressing them, 'why come ye to me? You have slighted every warning I could give of the coming harm, and now that it hath come upon you, ye seek my counsel when it can avail you nothing.'

'Look you, kinswoman,' said the Udaller, with his usual frankness and boldness of manner and accent, 'I must needs tell you that your courtesy is something of the coarsest and the coldest. I cannot say that I ever saw an adder, in regard there are none in these parts; but touching my own thoughts of what such a thing may be, it cannot be termed a suitable comparison to me or to my daughters, and that I would have you to know. For old acquaintance, and certain other reasons, I do not leave your house upon the instant; but as I came hither in all kindness and civility, so I pray you to receive me with the like, otherwise we will depart, and leave shame on your inhospitable threshold.'

'How,' said Norna, 'dare you use such bold language in the house of one from whom all men, from whom you yourself, come to solicit counsel and aid? They who speak to the Reimkennar must lower their voice to her before whom winds and waves hush both blast and billow.'

'Blast and billow may hush themselves if they will,' replied the peremptory Udaller, 'but that will not I. I speak in the house of my friend as in my own, and strike sail to none.'

'And hope ye,' said Norna, 'by this rudeness to compel me to answer to your interrogatories?'

'Kinswoman,' replied Magnus Troil, 'I know not so much as you of the old Norse sagas; but this I know, that when kempies were wont, long since, to seek the habitations of the galdragons and spæ-women, they came with their axes on their shoulders and their good swords drawn in their hands, and compelled the power whom they invoked to listen to and to answer them — ay, were it Odin himself.'

'Kinsman,' said Norna, arising from her seat and coming forward, 'thou hast spoken well, and in good time for thyself and thy daughters; for hadst thou turned from my threshold without extorting an answer, morning's sun had never again shone upon you. The spirits who serve me are jealous, and will not be employed in aught that may benefit humanity, unless their service is commanded by the undaunted impertunity of the brave and the free. And now speak, what wouldst thou have of me?'

'My daughter's health,' replied Magnus, 'which no remedies have been able to restore.'

'Thy daughter's health?' answered Norna; 'and what is the maiden's ailment?'

'The physician,' said Troil, 'must name the disease. All that I can tell thee of it is ——'

'Be silent,' said Norna, interrupting him, 'I know all that thou canst tell me, and more than thou thyself knowest. Sit down, all of you; and thou, maiden,' she said, addressing Minna, 'sit thou in that chair,' pointing to the place she had just left, 'once the seat of Giervada, at whose voice the stars hid their beams and the moon herself grew pale.'

Minna moved with slow and tremulous step towards the rude seat thus indicated to her. It was composed of stone, formed into some semblance of a chair by the rough and unskilful hand of some ancient Gothic artist.

Brenda, creeping as close as possible to her father, seated herself along with him upon a bench at some distance from Minna, and kept her eyes, with a mixture of fear, pity, and anxiety, closely fixed upon her. It would be difficult altogether to decipher the emotions by which this amiable and affectionate girl was agitated at that moment. Deficient in her sister's predominating quality of high imagination, and little credulous, of course, to the marvellous, she could not but entertain some vague and indefinite fears on her own account, concerning the nature of the scene which was soon to take place. But these were in a manner swallowed up in her apprehensions on the score of her sister, who, with a frame so much weakened, spirits so much exhausted, and a mind so susceptible of the impressions which all around her was calculated to excite, now sat pensively resigned to the agency of one whose treatment might produce the most baneful effects upon such a subject.

Brenda gazed at Minna, who sat in that rude chair of dark stone, her finely-formed shape and limbs making the strongest contrast with its ponderous and irregular angles, her cheek and lips as pale as clay, and her eyes turned upward, and lighted with the mixture of resignation and excited enthusiasm which belonged to her disease and her character. The younger sister then looked on Norna, who muttered to herself in a low, monotonous manner, as, gliding from one place to another, she collected different articles, which she placed one by one on the table. And, lastly, Brenda looked anxiously to her father, to gather, if possible, from his countenance, whether he entertained

any part of her own fears for the consequences of the scene which was to ensue, considering the state of Minna's health and spirits. But Magnus Troil seemed to have no such apprehensions: he viewed with stern composure Norna's preparations, and appeared to wait the event with the composure of one who, confiding in the skill of a medical artist, sees him preparing to enter upon some important and painful operation, in the issue of which he is interested by friendship or by affection.

Norna, meanwhile, went onward with her preparations, until she had placed on the stone table a variety of miscellaneous articles, and among the rest a small chafing-dish full of charcoal, a crucible, and a piece of thin sheet-lead. She then spoke aloud — 'It is well that I was aware of your coming hither — ay, long before you yourself had resolved it — how should I else have been prepared for that which is now to be done? Maiden,' she continued, addressing Minna, 'where lies thy pain?'

The patient answered by pressing her hand to the left side of her bosom.

'Even so,' replied Norna — 'even so, 't is the site of weal or woe. And you, her father and her sister, think not this the idle speech of one who talks by guess: if I can tell thee ill, it may be that I shall be able to render that less severe which may not, by any aid, be wholly amended. The heart — ay, the heart! touch that, and the eye grows dim, the pulse fails, the wholesome stream of our blood is choked and troubled, our limbs decay like sapless sea-weed in a summer's sun, our better views of existence are past and gone; what remains is the dream of lost happiness or the fear of inevitable evil. But the Reim-kennar must to her work; well is it that I have prepared the means.'

She threw off her long dark-coloured mantle, and stood before them in her short jacket of light blue wadmaal, with its skirt of the same stuff, fancifully embroidered with black velvet, and bound at the waist with a chain or girdle of silver, formed into singular devices. Norna next undid the fillet which bound her grizzled hair, and shaking her head wildly, caused it to fall in dishevelled abundance over her face and around her shoulders, so as almost entirely to hide her features. She then placed a small crucible on the chafing-dish already mentioned, dropped a few drops from a vial on the charcoal below, pointed towards it her wrinkled forefinger, which she had previously moistened with liquid from another small bottle, and said with a deep voice, 'Fire, do thy duty'; and



MINNA LOOKED EAGERLY ON NORNA.
From a painting by John A. Houston, R.S.A.

the words were no sooner spoken than, probably by some chemical combination of which the spectators were not aware, the charcoal which was under the crucible became slowly ignited; while Norma, as if impatient of the delay, threw hastily back her disordered tresses, and, while her features reflected the sparkles and red light of the fire, and her eyes flashed from amidst her hair like those of a wild animal from its cover, blew fiercely till the whole was in an intense glow. She paused a moment from her toil, and muttering that the elemental spirit must be thanked, recited, in her usual monotonous, yet wild, note of chanting, the following verses :¹ —

‘Thou so needful, yet so dread,
With cloudy crest and wing of red —
Thou, without whose genial breath
The North would sleep the sleep of death,
Who deign’st to warm the cottage hearth,
Yet hurl’st proud palaces to earth, —
Brightest, keenest of the powers,
Which form and rule this world of ours,
With my rhyme of Runic, I
Thank thee for thy agency.’

She then severed a portion from the small mass of sheet-lead which lay upon the table, and, placing it in the crucible, subjected it to the action of the lighted charcoal, and, as it melted, she sung —

‘Old Reim-kennar, to thy art
Mother Hertha sends her part ;
She, whose gracious bounty gives
Needful food for all that lives.
From the deep mine of the North
Came the mystic metal forth,
Doom’d, amidst disjointed stones,
Long to cere a champion’s bones,
Disinhumed my charms to aid —
Mother Earth, my thanks are paid.’

She then poured out some water from the jar into a large cup, or goblet, and sung once more, as she slowly stirred it round with the end of her staff : —

‘Girdle of our islands dear,
Element of water, hear,
Thou whose power can overwhelm
Broken mounds and ruin’d realm
On the lowly Belgian strand,

¹ See Norma’s Spells. Note 36.

THE PIRATE

All thy fiercest rage can never
 Of our soil a furlong sever
 From our rock-defended land ;
 Play then gently thou thy part,
 To assist old Norna's art.

She then, with a pair of pincers, removed the crucible from the chafing-dish, and poured the lead, now entirely melted, into the bowl of water, repeating at the same time —

'Elements, each other greeting,
 Gifts and powers attend your meeting !'

The melted lead, spattering as it fell into the water, formed, of course, the usual combination of irregular forms which is familiar to all who in childhood have made the experiment, and from which, according to our childish fancy, we may have selected portions bearing some resemblance to domestic articles, the tools of mechanics, or the like. Norna seemed to busy herself in some such researches, for she examined the mass of lead with scrupulous attention, and detached it into different portions, without apparently being able to find a fragment in the form which she desired.

At length she again muttered, rather as speaking to herself than to her guests, 'He, the Viewless, will not be omitted : he will have his tribute even in the work to which he gives nothing. Stern compeller of the clouds, thou shalt also hear the voice of the Reim-kennar.'

Thus speaking, Norna once more threw the lead into the crucible, where, hissing and spattering as the wet metal touched the sides of the red-hot vessel, it was soon again reduced into a state of fusion. The sibyl meantime turned to a corner of the apartment, and opening suddenly a window which looked to the north-west, let in the fitful radiance of the sun, now lying almost level upon a great mass of red clouds, which, boding future tempest, occupied the edge of the horizon, and seemed to brood over the billows of the boundless sea. Turning to this quarter, from which a low hollow moaning breeze then blew, Norna addressed the Spirit of the Winds, in tones which seemed to resemble his own :

'Thou, that over billows dark
 Safely send'st the fisher's bark,
 Giving him a path and motion
 Through the wilderness of ocean —
 Thou, that when the billows brave-ye,
 O'er the shelves canst drive the uavy,

Did'st thou chafe as one neglected,
 While thy brethren were respected ?
 To appease thee, see, I tear
 This full grasp of grizzled hair.
 Oft thy breath hath through it sung,
 Softening to my magic tongue ;
 Now, 't is thine to bid it fly
 Through the wide expanse of sky,
 'Mid the countless swarms to sail
 Of wild-fowl wheeling on thy gale.
 Take thy portion and rejoice ;
 Spirit, thou hast heard my voice !'

Norna accompanied these words with the action which they described, tearing a handful of hair with vehemence from her head, and strewing it upon the wind as she continued her recitation. She then shut the casement, and again involved the chamber in the dubious twilight which best suited her character and occupation. The melted lead was once more emptied into the water, and the various whimsical conformations which it received from the operation were examined with great care by the sibyl, who at length seemed to intimate by voice and gesture that her spell had been successful. She selected from the fused metal a piece about the size of a small nut, bearing in shape a close resemblance to that of the human heart, and approaching Minna, again spoke in song :

'She who sits by haunted well
 Is subject to the nixie's spell ;
 She who walks on lonely beach
 To the mermaid's charmed speech ;
 She who walks round ring of green,
 Offends the peevish fairy queen ;
 And she who takes rest in the dwarfie's cave,
 A weary weird of woe shall have.

By ring, by spring, by cave, by shore,
 Minna Troil has braved all this and more :
 And yet hath the root of her sorrow and ill
 A source that 's more deep and more mystical still.'

Minna, whose attention had been latterly something disturbed by reflections on her own secret sorrow, now suddenly recalled it, and looked eagerly on Norna, as if she expected to learn from her rhymes something of deep interest. The Northern sibyl meanwhile proceeded to pierce the piece of lead, which bore the form of a heart, and to fix in it a piece of gold wire, by which it might be attached to a chain or necklace. She then proceeded in her rhyme :

'Thou art within a demon's hold,
 More wise than Heima, more strong than Trold;
 No siren sings so sweet as he,
 No fay springs lighter on the lea;
 No elfin power hath half the art
 To soothe, to move, to wring the heart,
 Life-blood from the cheek to drain,
 Drench the eye, and dry the vein.
 Maiden, ere we farther go,
 Dost thou note me, ay or no?'

Minna replied in the same rhythmical manner, which, in jest and earnest, was frequently used by the ancient Scandinavians —

'I mark thee, my mother, both word, look, and sign;
 Speak on with the riddle — to read it be mine.'

'Now, Heaven and every saint be praised!' said Magnus; 'they are the first words to the purpose which she hath spoken these many days.'

'And they are the last which she shall speak for many a month,' said Norna, incensed at the interruption, 'if you again break the progress of my spell. Turn your faces to the wall, and look not hitherward again, under penalty of my severe displeasure. You, Magnus Troil, from hard-hearted audacity of spirit, and you, Brenda, from wanton and idle disbelief in that which is beyond your bounden comprehension, are unworthy to look on this mystic work; and the glance of your eyes mingles with and weakens the spell; for the powers cannot brook distrust.'

Unaccustomed to be addressed in a tone so peremptory, Magnus would have made some angry reply; but reflecting that the health of Minna was at stake, and considering that she who spoke was a woman of many sorrows, he suppressed his anger, bowed his head, shrugged his shoulders, assumed the prescribed posture, averting his head from the table and turning towards the wall. Brenda did the same, on receiving a sign from her father, and both remained profoundly silent.

Norna then addressed Minna once more:

'Mark me! for the word I speak
 Shall bring the colour to thy cheek.
 This leaden heart, so light of cost,
 The symbol of a treasure lost,
 Thou shalt wear in hope and in peace,
 That the cause of your sickness and sorrow may cease,
 When crimson foot meets crimson hand
 In the Martyrs' aisle, and in Orkney-land.'

Minna coloured deeply at the last couplet, intimating, as she sailed not to interpret it, that Norna was completely acquainted with the secret cause of her sorrow. The same conviction led the maiden to hope in the favourable issue which the sibyl seemed to prophesy ; and not venturing to express her feelings in any manner more intelligible, she pressed Norna's withered hand with all the warmth of affection, first to her breast and then to her bosom, bedewing it at the same time with her tears.

With more of human feeling than she usually exhibited, Norna extricated her hand from the grasp of the poor girl, whose tears now flowed freely, and then, with more tenderness of manner than she had yet shown, she knotted the leaden heart to a chain of gold, and hung it around Minna's neck, singing, as she performed that last branch of the spell —

'Be patient, be patient, for patience hath power
To ward us in danger, like mantle in shower.
A fairy gift you best may hold
In a chain of fairy gold ;
The chain and the gift are each a true token,
That not without warrant old Norna hath spoken ;
But thy nearest and dearest must never behold them,
Till time shall accomplish the truths I have told them.'

The verses being concluded, Norna carefully arranged the chain around her patient's neck so as to hide it in her bosom, and thus ended the spell — a spell which, at the moment I record these incidents, it is known has been lately practised in Zetland, where any decline of health, without apparent cause, is imputed by the lower orders to a demon having stolen the heart from the body of the patient, and where the experiment of supplying the deprivation by a leaden one, prepared in the manner described, has been resorted to within these few years. In a metaphorical sense, the disease may be considered as a general one in all parts of the world ; but, as this simple and original remedy is peculiar to the isles of Thule, it were unpardonable not to preserve it at length, in a narrative connected with Scottish antiquities.

A second time Norna reminded her patient that, if she showed, or spoke of, the fairy gifts, their virtue would be lost — a belief so common as to be received into the superstitions of all nations. Lastly, unbuttoning the collar which she had just fastened, she showed her a link of the gold chain, which Minna instantly recognised as that formerly given by Norna to

Mordaunt Mertoun. This seemed to intimate he was yet alive, and under Norna's protection ; and she gazed on her with the most eager curiosity. But the sibyl imposed her finger on her lips in token of silence, and a second time involved the chain in those folds which modestly and closely veiled one of the most beautiful, as well as one of the kindest, bosoms in the world.

Norna then extinguished the lighted charcoal, and, as the water hissed upon the glowing embers, commanded Magnus and Brenda to look around and behold her task accomplished.

CHAPTER XXIX

See yonder woman, whom our swains revere,
And dread in secret, while they take her counsel
When sweetheart shall be kind, or when cross dame shall die ;
Where lurks the thief who stole the silver tankard,
And how the pestilent murrain may be cured.
This sage adviser 's mad, stark mad, my friend ;
Yet, in her madness hath the art and cunning
To wring fools' secrets from their inmost bosoms,
And pay inquirers with the coin they gave her.

Old Play.

IT seemed as if Norna had indeed full right to claim the gratitude of the Udaller for the improved condition of his daughter's health. She once more threw open the window, and Minna, drying her eyes and advancing with affectionate confidence, threw herself on her father's neck, and asked his forgiveness for the trouble she had of late occasioned to him. It is unnecessary to add that this was at once granted, with a full, though rough, burst of paternal tenderness, and as many close embraces as if his child had been just rescued from the jaws of death. When Magnus had dismissed Minna from his arms, to throw herself into those of her sister, and express to her, rather by kisses and tears than in words, the regret she entertained for her late wayward conduct, the Udaller thought proper, in the meantime, to pay his thanks to their hostess, whose skill had proved so efficacious. But scarce had he come out with, 'Much respected kinswoman, I am but a plain old Norseman ——' when she interrupted him by pressing her finger on her lips.

'There are those around us,' she said, 'who must hear no mortal voice, witness no sacrifice to mortal feelings : there are times when they even mutiny against me, their sovereign mistress, because I am still shrouded in the flesh of humanity. Fear, therefore, and be silent. I, whose deeds have raised me from the low-sheltered valley of life, where dwell its social wants and common charities — I, who have bereft the giver of

the gift which he gave, and stand alone on a cliff of immeasurable height, detached from earth, save from the small portion that supports my miserable tread — I alone am fit to cope with these sullen mates. Fear not, therefore, but yet be not too bold, and let this night to you be one of fasting and of prayer.'

If the Udaller had not, before the commencement of the operation, been disposed to dispute the commands of the sibyl, it may be well believed he was less so now that it had terminated to all appearance so fortunately. So he sat down in silence, and seized upon a volume which lay near him as a sort of desperate effort to divert *ennui*, for on no other occasion had Magnus been known to have recourse to a book for that purpose. It chanced to be a book much to his mind, being the well-known work of Olaus Magnus, upon the manners of the ancient Northern nations. The book is unluckily in the Latin language, and the Danske or Dutch were, either of them, much more familiar to the Udaller. But then it was the fine edition published in 1555, which contains representations of the war-chariots, fishing exploits, warlike exercises, and domestic employments of the Scandinavians, executed in copper-plates; and thus the information which the work refused to the understanding was addressed to the eye, which, as is well known both to old and young, answers the purpose of amusement as well, if not better.

Meanwhile the two sisters, pressed as close to each other as two flowers on the same stalk, sat with their arms reciprocally passed over each other's shoulder, as if they feared some new and unforeseen cause of coldness was about to separate them, and interrupt the sister-like harmony which had been but just restored. Norna sat opposite to them, sometimes revolving the large parchment volume with which they had found her employed at their entrance, and sometimes gazing on the sisters with a fixed look, in which an interest of a kind unusually tender seemed occasionally to disturb the stern and rigorous solemnity of her countenance. All was still and silent as death, and the subsiding emotions of Brenda had not yet permitted her to wonder whether the remaining hours of the evening were to be passed in the same manner, when the scene of tranquillity was suddenly interrupted by the entrance of the dwarf Pacolet, or, as the Udaller called him, Nicholas Strumpfer.

Norna darted an angry glance on the intruder, who seemed to deprecate her resentment by holding up his hands and

uttering a babbling sound; then, instantly resorting to his usual mode of conversation, he expressed himself by a variety of signs made rapidly upon his fingers, and as rapidly answered by his mistress, so that the young women, who had never heard of such an art, and now saw it practised by two beings so singular, almost conceived their mutual intelligence the work of enchantment. When they had ceased their intercourse, Norna turned to Magnus Troil with much haughtiness and said, 'How, my kinsman, have you so far forgot yourself as to bring earthly food into the house of the Reim-kennar, and make preparations in the dwelling of power and of despair for refection, and wassail, and revelry? Speak not — answer not,' she said; 'the duration of the cure which was wrought even now depends on your silence and obedience: bandy but a single look or word with me, and the latter condition of that maiden shall be worse than the first!'

This threat was an effectual charm upon the tongue of the Udaller, though he longed to indulge it in vindication of his conduct.

'Follow me, all of you,' said Norna, striding to the door of the apartment, 'and see that no one looks backwards: we leave not this apartment empty, though we, the children of mortality, be removed from it.'

She went out, and the Udaller signed to his daughters to follow and to obey her injunctions. The sibyl moved swifter than her guests down the rude descent (such it might rather be termed than a proper staircase) which led to the lower apartment. Magnus and his daughters, when they entered the chamber, found their own attendants aghast at the presence and proceedings of Norna of the Fitful Head.

They had been previously employed in arranging the provisions which they had brought along with them, so as to present a comfortable cold meal as soon as the appetite of the Udaller, which was as regular as the return of tide, should induce him to desire some refreshment: and now they stood staring in fear and surprise, while Norna, seizing upon one article after another, and well supported by the zealous activity of Pacolet, flung their whole preparations out of the rude aperture which served for a window, and over the cliff, from which the ancient burgh arose, into the ocean, which raged and foamed beneath. 'Vifla' (dried beef), hams, and pickled pork flew after each other into empty space, smoked geese were restored to the air, and cured fish to the sea, their native elements indeed, but which they

were no longer capable of traversing ; and the devastation proceeded so rapidly that the Udaller could scarce secure from the wreck his silver drinking-cup ; while the large leathern flask of brandy which was destined to supply his favourite beverage was sent to follow the rest of the supper by the hands of Pacolet, who regarded, at the same time, the disappointed Udaller with a malicious grin, as if, notwithstanding his own natural taste for the liquor, he enjoyed the disappointment and surprise of Magnus Troil still more than he would have relished sharing his enjoyment.

'The destruction of the brandy flask exhausted the patience of Magnus, who roared out, in a tone of no small displeasure, 'Why, kinswoman, this is wasteful madness : where, and on what, would you have us sup ?'

'Where you will,' answered Norna, 'and on what you will ; but not in my dwelling, and not on the food with which you have profaned it. Vex my spirit no more, but begone every one of you ! You have been here too long for my good, perhaps for your own.'

'How, kinswoman,' said Magnus, 'would you make outcasts of us at this time of night, when even a Scotchman would not turn a stranger from the door ? Bethink you, dame, it is shame on our lineage for ever if this squall of yours should force us to slip cables and go to sea so scantily provided.'

'Be silent, and depart,' said Norna ; 'let it suffice you have got that for which you came. I have no harbourage for mortal guests, no provision to relieve human wants. There is beneath the cliff a beach of the finest sand, a stream of water as pure as the well of Kildinguie, and the rocks bear dulse as wholesome as that of Guiodin ; and well you wot that the well of Kildinguie and the dulse of Guiodin will cure all maladies save Black Death.'¹

'And well I wot,' said the Udaller, 'that I would eat corrupted sea-weed like a starling, or salted seal's flesh like the men of Burraforth, or wilks, buckies, and lampits, like the poor sneaks of Stroma, rather than break wheat bread and drink red wine in a house where it is begrudged me. And yet,' he said, checking himself, 'I am wrong — very wrong, my cousin, to speak thus to you, and I should rather thank you for what you have done than upbraid you for following your own ways. But I see you are impatient — we will be all under way presently. And you, ye knaves,' addressing his servants, 'that were in

¹ So at least says an Orkney proverb.

such hurry with your service before it was lacked, get out of doors with you presently, and manage to catch the ponies ; for I see we must make for another harbour to-night, if we would not sleep with an empty stomach and on a hard bed.'

The domestics of Magnus, already sufficiently alarmed at the violence of Norna's conduct, scarce waited the imperious command of their master to evacuate her dwelling with all despatch ; and the Udaller, with a daughter on each arm, was in the act of following them, when Norna said emphatically, 'Stop !' They obeyed, and again turned towards her. She held out her hand to Magnus, which the placable Udaller instantly folded in his own ample palm.

'Magnus,' she said, 'we part by necessity, but, I trust, not in anger ?'

'Surely not, cousin,' said the warm-hearted Udaller, well-nigh stammering in his hasty disclamation of all unkindness — 'most assuredly not. I never bear ill-will to any one, much less to one of my own blood, and who has piloted me with her advice through many a rough tide, as I would pilot a boat betwixt Swona and Stroma, through all the waws, wells, and swelchies of the Pentland Firth.'

'Enough,' said Norna, 'and now farewell, with such a blessing as I dare bestow — not a word more !' Maidens,' she added, 'draw near and let me kiss your brows.'

The sibyl was obeyed by Minna with awe, and by Brenda with fear ; the one overmastered by the warmth of her imagination, the other by the natural timidity of her constitution. Norna then dismissed them, and in two minutes afterwards they found themselves beyond the bridge, and standing upon the rocky platform in front of the ancient Pictish burgh which it was the pleasure of this sequestered female to inhabit. The night, for it was now fallen, was unusually serene. A bright twilight, which glimmered far over the surface of the sea, supplied the brief absence of the summer's sun ; and the waves seemed to sleep under its influence, so faint and slumberous was the sound with which one after another rolled on and burst against the foot of the cliff on which they stood. In front of them stood the rugged fortress, seeming, in the uniform grey-ness of the atmosphere, as aged, as shapeless, and as massive as the rock on which it was founded. There was neither sight nor sound that indicated human habitation, save that from one rude shot-hole glimmered the flame of the feeble lamp by which the sibyl was probably pursuing her mystical and nocturnal

studied, shooting upon the twilight, in which it was soon lost and confounded, a single line of tiny light; bearing the same proportion to that of the atmosphere as the aged woman and her serf, the sole inhabitants of that desert, did to the solitude with which they were surrounded.

For several minutes the party, thus suddenly and unexpectedly expelled from the shelter where they had reckoned upon spending the night, stood in silence, each wrapt in their own separate reflections. Minna, her thoughts fixed on the mystical consolation which she had received, in vain endeavoured to extract from the words of Norna a more distinct and intelligible meaning; and the Udaller had not yet recovered his surprise at the extrusion to which he had been thus whimsically subjected, under circumstances that prohibited him from resenting as an insult treatment which, in all other respects, was so shocking to the genial hospitality of his nature that he still felt like one disposed to be angry, if he but knew how to set about it. Brenda was the first who brought matters to a point by asking whither they were to go, and how they were to spend the night. The question, which was asked in a tone that, amidst its simplicity, had something dolorous in it, entirely changed the train of her father's ideas; and the unexpected perplexity of their situation now striking him in a comic point of view, he laughed till his very eyes ran over, while every rock around him rung, and the sleeping sea-fowl were startled from their repose by the loud, hearty explosions of his obstreperous hilarity.

The Udaller's daughters, eagerly representing to their father the risk of displeasing Norna by this unlimited indulgence of his mirth, united their efforts to drag him to a farther distance from her dwelling. Magnus, yielding to their strength, which, feeble as it was, his own fit of laughter rendered him incapable of resisting, suffered himself to be pulled to a considerable distance from the burgh, and then escaping from their hands, and sitting down, or rather suffering himself to drop, upon a large stone which lay conveniently by the wayside, he again laughed so long and lustily that his vexed and anxious daughters became afraid that there was something more than natural in these repeated convulsions.

At length his mirth exhausted both itself and the Udaller's strength. He groaned heavily, wiped his eyes, and said, not without feeling some desire to renew his obstreperous cachinnation, 'Now, by the bones of St. Magnus, my ancestor and

namesake, one would imagine that being turned out of doors at this time of night was nothing short of an absolutely exquisite jest ; for I have shaken my sides at it till they ached. There we sat, made snug for the night, and I made as sure of a good supper and a can as ever I had been of either ; and here we are all taken aback ! and then poor Brenda's doleful voice, and melancholy question of, "What is to be done, and where are we to sleep ?" In good faith, unless one of those knaves, who must needs torment the poor woman by their trencher-work before it was wanted, can make amends by telling us of some snug port under our lee, we have no other course for it but to steer through the twilight on the bearing of Burgh-Westra, and rough it out as well as we can by the way. I am sorry but for you, girls ; for many a cruise have I been upon when we were on shorter allowance than we are like to have now ; I would I had but secured a morsel for you and a drop for myself, and then there had been but little to complain of.

Both sisters hastened to assure the Udailer that they felt not the least occasion for food.

'Why, that is well,' said Magnus, 'and so being the case, I will not complain of my own appetite, though it is sharper than convenient. And the rascal, Nicholas Strumpfer -- what a leer the villain gave me as he started the good Nantz into the salt-water ! He grinned, the knave, like a seal on a skerry. Had it not been for vexing my poor kinswoman, Norna, I would have sent his misbegotten body and misshapen jolterhead after my bonny flask, as sure as St. Magnus lies at Kirkwall !'

By this time the servants returned with the ponies, which they had very soon caught ; these sensible animals finding nothing so captivating in the pastures where they had been suffered to stray as inclined them to resist the invitation again to subject themselves to saddle and bridle. The prospects of the party were also considerably improved by learning that the contents of their sumpter pony's burden had not been entirely exhausted -- a small basket having fortunately escaped the rage of Norna and Pacolet by the rapidity with which one of the servants had caught up and removed it. The same domestic, an alert and ready-witted fellow, had observed upon the beach, not above three miles distant from the burgh, and about a quarter of a mile off their straight path, a deserted 'skeo,' or fisherman's hut, and suggested that they should occupy it for the rest of the night, in order that the ponies might be refreshed, and the young ladies spend the night under cover from the raw evening air.

When we are delivered from great and serious dangers, our mood is, or ought to be, grave in proportion to the peril we have escaped and the gratitude due to protecting Providence. But few things raise the spirits more naturally or more harmlessly than when means of extrication from any of the lesser embarrassments of life are suddenly presented to us; and such was the case in the present instance. The Udaller, relieved from the apprehensions for his daughters suffering from fatigue, and himself from too much appetite and too little food, carolled Norse ditties, as he spurred Bergen through the twilight, with as much glee and gallantry as if the night-ride had been entirely a matter of his own free choice. Brenda lent her voice to some of his choruses, which were echoed in ruder notes by the servants, who, in that simple state of society, were not considered as guilty of any breach of respect by mingling their voices with the song. Minna, indeed, was as yet unequal to such an effort; but she compelled herself to assume some share in the general hilarity of the meeting; and, contrary to her conduct since the fatal morning which concluded the festival of St. John, she seemed to take her usual interest in what was going on around her, and answered with kindness and readiness the repeated inquiries concerning her health with which the Udaller every now and then interrupted his carol. And thus they proceeded by night, a happier party by far than they had been when they traced the same route on the preceding [that same] morning, making light of the difficulties of the way, and promising themselves shelter and a comfortable night's rest in the deserted hut which they were now about to approach, and which they expected to find in a state of darkness and solitude.

But it was the lot of the Udaller that day to be deceived more than once in his calculations.

'And which way lies this cabin of yours, Laurie?' said the Udaller, addressing the intelligent domestic of whom we just spoke.

'Yonder it should be,' said Laurence Scholey, 'at the head of the voe; but, by my faith, if it be the place, there are not there before us. God and St. Ronan send that they be coming company!'

In truth there was a light in the deserted hut, strong enough to glimmer through every chink of the shingles and wreck-wood of which it was constructed, and to give the whole cabin the appearance of a smithy seen by night. The universal

superstition of the Zetlanders seized upon Magnus and his escort.

'They are trows,' said one voice.

'They are witches,' murmured another.

'They are mermaids,' muttered a third: 'only hear their wild singing!'

All stopped; and, in effect, some notes of music were audible, which Brenda, with a voice that quivered a little, but yet had a turn of arch ridicule in its tone, pronounced to be the sound of a fiddle.

'Fiddle or fiend,' said the Udaller, who, if he believed in such nightly apparitions as had struck terror into his retinue, certainly feared them not — 'fiddle or fiend, may the devil fetch me if a witch cheats me out of supper to-night for the second time!'

So saying, he dismounted, clenched his trusty truncheon in his hand, and advanced towards the hut, followed by Laurence alone; the rest of his retinue continuing stationary on the beach beside his daughters and his ponies.

CHAPTER XXX

What ho, my jovial mates ! come on ! we 'll frolic it
Like fairies frisking in the merry moonshine,
Seen by the curtal friar, who, from some christening
Or some blithe bridal, hies belated cell-ward ;
He starts, and changes his bold bottle swagger
To churchman's pace professional, and, ransacking
His treacherous memory for some holy hymn,
Finds but the roundel of the midnight catch.

Old Play.

THE stride of the Udaller relaxed nothing of its length or of its firmness as he approached the glimmering cabin, from which he now heard distinctly the sound of the fiddle. But, if still long and firm, his steps succeeded each other rather more slowly than usual ; for, like a cautious, though a brave, general, Magnus was willing to reconnoitre his enemy before assailing him.

The trusty Laurence Scholey, who kept close behind his master, now whispered into his ear, 'So help me, sir, as I believe that the ghaist, if ghaist it be, that plays so bravely on the fiddle must be the ghaist of Maister Claud Halero, or his wraith at least ; for never was bow drawn across thairm which brought out the gude auld spring of "Fair and Lucky" so like his ain.'

Magnus was himself much of the same opinion ; for he knew the blithe minstrelsy of the spirited little old man, and hailed the hut with a hearty hilloah, which was immediately replied to by the cheery note of his ancient messmate, and Halero himself presently made his appearance on the beach.

The Udaller now signed to his retinue to come up, while he asked his friend, after a kind greeting and much shaking of hands, 'How the devil he came to sit there, playing old tunes in so desolate a place, like an owl whooping to the moon ?'

'And tell me rather, Fowd,' said Claud Halero, 'how you come to be within hearing of me ? ay, by my word, and with your bonny daughters, too ? Jarto Minna and Jarto Brenda, I bid you welcome to these yellow sands ; and there, shake hands,

as glorious John, or some other body, says upon the same occasion. And how came you here like two fair swans, making day out of twilight, and turning all you step upon to silver ?

'You shall know all about them presently,' answered Magnus ; 'but what messmates have you got in the hut with you ? I think I hear some one speaking.'

'None,' replied Claud Halero, 'but that poor creature, the factor, and my imp of a boy, Giles. I — but come in — come in ; here you will find us starving in comfort — not so much as a mouthful of sour sillocks to be had for love or money.'

'That may be in a small part helped,' said the Udaller ; 'for, though the best of our supper is gone over the Fitful Crags to the sealchies and the dog-fish, yet we have got something in the kit still. Here, Laurie, bring up the "vifda."'

'*Jokul — Jokul !*'¹ was Laurence's joyful answer ; and he hastened for the basket.

'By the bicker of St. Magnus,'² said Halero, 'and the burliest bishop that ever quaffed it for luck's sake, there is no finding your locker empty, Magnus ! I believe sincerely that, ere a friend wanted, you could, like old Luggie,³ the warlock, fish up boiled and roasted out of the pool of Kibster.'

'You are wrong there, Jarto Claud,' said Magnus Troil, 'for, far from helping me to a supper, the foul fiend, I believe, has carried off great part of mine this blessed evening ; but you are welcome to share and share of what is left.' This was said while the party entered the hut.

Here, in a cabin which smelled strongly of dried fish, and whose sides and roof were jet-black with smoke, they found the unhappy Triptolemus Yellowley seated beside a fire made of dried sea-weed, mingled with some peats and wreck-wood ; his sole companion a bare-footed, yellow-haired Zetland boy, who acted occasionally as a kind of page to Claud Halero, bearing his fiddle on his shoulder, saddling his pony, and rendering him similar duties of kindly observance. The disconsolate agriculturist, for such his visage betokened him, displayed little surprise, and less animation, at the arrival of the Udaller and his companions, until, after the party had drawn close to the fire (a neighbourhood which the dampness of the night air rendered far from disagreeable), the pannier was opened, and a tolerable supply of barley-bread and hung beef, besides a flask of brandy (no doubt smaller than that which the relentless hand of Pacolet

¹ *Jokul* — yes, sir ; a Norse expression, still in common use.

² See Note 37.

³ See Note 38.

had emptied into the ocean), gave assurances of a tolerable supper. Then, indeed, the worthy factor grinned, chuckled, rubbed his hands, and inquired after all friends at Burgh-Westra.

When they had all partaken of this needful refreshment, the Udaller repeated his inquiries of Halero, and more particularly of the factor, how they came to be nestled in such a remote corner at such an hour of night.

'Maister Magnus Troil,' said Triptolemus, when a second cup had given him spirits to tell his tale of woe, 'I would not have you think that it is a little thing that disturbs me. I come of that grain that takes a sair wind to shake it. I have seen many a Martinmas and many a Whitsunday in my day, whilk are the times peculiarly grievous to those of my craft, and I could aye bide the bang; but I think I am like to be dung ower a'thegither in this damned country of yours. Gude forgie me for swearing; but evil communication corrupteth good manners.'

'Now, Heaven guide us,' said the Udaller, 'what is the matter with the man? Why, man, if you will put your plough into new land, you must look to have it hank on a stone now and then. You must set us an example of patience, seeing you came here for our improvement.'

'And the deil was in my feet when I did so,' said the factor: 'I had better have set myself to improve the cairn on Clochnaben.'

'But what is it, after all,' said the Udaller, 'that has befallen you? what is it that you complain of?'

'Of everything that has chanced to me since I landed on this island, which I believe was accursed at the very creation,' said the agriculturist, 'and assigned as a fitting station for sorners, thieves, whores — I beg the ladies' pardon — witches, bitches, and all evil spirits!'

'By my faith, a goodly catalogue!' said Magnus; 'and there has been the day that, if I had heard you give out the half of it, I should have turned improver myself, and have tried to amend your manners with a cudgel.'

'Bear with me,' said the factor, 'Maister Fowd, or Maister Udaller, or whatever else they may call you, and as you are strong be pitiful, and consider the luckless lot of any inexperienced person who lights upon this earthly paradise of yours. He asks for drink, they bring him sour whey — no disparagement to your brandy, Fowd, which is excellent. You ask for meat, and they bring you sour sillocks that Satan

might choke upon. You call your labourers together, and bid them work ; it proves St. Magnus's day, or St. Ronan's day, or some infernal saint or other's ; or else, perhaps, they have come out of bed with the wrong foot foremost, or they have seen an owl, or a rabbit has crossed their path, or they have dreamed of a roasted horse — in short, nothing is to be done. Give them a spade, and they work as if it burned their fingers ; but set them to dancing, and see when they will tire of funking and flinging !'

'And why should they, poor bodies,' said Claud Halero, 'as long as there are good fiddlers to play to them ?'

'Ay — ay,' said Triptolemus, shaking his head, 'you are a proper person to uphold them in such a humour. Well, to proceed. I till a piece of my best ground ; down comes a sturdy beggar that wants a kail-yard, or a plant-a-cruive, as you call it, and he claps down an inclosure in the middle of my bit shot of corn, as lightly as if he was baith laird and tenant ; and gainsay him wha likes, there he dibble in his kail-plants ! I sit down to my sorrowful dinner, thinking to have peace and quietness there at least, when in comes one, two, three, four, or half a dozen of skelping long lads, from some foolery or anither, misca' me for barring my ain door against them, and eat up the best half of what my sister's providence — and she is not over bountiful — has allotted for my dinner ! Then enters a witch, with an ell-wand in her hand, and she raises the wind or lays it, whichever she likes, majors up and down my house as if she was mistress of it, and I am bounden to thank Heaven if she carries not the broadside of it away with her !'

'Still,' said the Fowd, 'this is no answer to my question — how the foul fiend I come to find you at moorings here ?'

'Have patience, worthy sir,' replied the afflicted factor, 'and listen to what I have to say, for I fancy it will be as well to tell you the whole matter. You must know, I once thought that I had gotten a small godsend, that might have made all these matters easier.'

'How ! a godsend ! Do you mean a wreck, Master Factor ?' exclaimed Magnus ; 'shame upon you, that should have set example to others !'

'It was no wreck,' said the factor ; 'but, if you must needs know, it chanced that, as I raised an hearthstane in one of the old chambers at Stourburgh — for my sister is minded that there is little use in mair fireplaces about a house than one, and I wanted the stane to knock bear upon — when what should

I light on but a horn full of old coins, silver the maist feck of them, but wi' a bit sprinkling of gold among them too.¹ Weel, I thought this was a dainty windfa', and so thought Baby, and we were the mair willing to put up with a place where there were siccan braw nest-eggs; and we slade down the stane cannily over the horn, which seemed to me to be the very cornucopia, or horn of abundance; and for further security Baby wad visit the room maybe twenty times in the day, and mysell at an orra time, to the boot of a' that.'

'On my word, and a very pretty amusement,' said Claud Halero, 'to look over a horn of one's own siller. I question if glorious John Dryden ever enjoyed such a pastime in his life; I am very sure I never did.'

'Yes, but you forget, Jarto Claud,' said the Udaller, 'that the factor was only counting over the money for my lord the chamberlain. As he is so keen for his lordship's rights in whales and wrecks, surely he would not forget him in treasure-trove.'

'A-hem! a-hem! a-he—he—he!' ejaculated Triptolemus, seized at the moment with an awkward fit of coughing; 'no doubt, my lord's right in the matter would have been considered, being in the hand of one, though I say it, as just as can be found in Angusshire, let alone the Mearns. But mark what happened of late! One day, as I went up to see that all was safe and snug, and just to count out the share that should have been his lordship's—for surely the labourer, as one may call the finder, is worthy of his hire—nay, some learned men say that, when the finder, in point of trust and in point of power, representeth the *dominus*, or lord superior, he taketh the whole; but let that pass, as a kittle question *in apicibus juris*, as we wont to say at St. Andrews—well, sir and ladies, when I went to the upper chamber, what should I see but an ugsome, ill-shaped, and most uncouth dwarf, that wanted but hoofs and horns to have made an utter devil of him, counting over the very hornful of siller! I am no timorous man, Master Fowd, but, judging that I should proceed with caution in such a matter—for I had reason to believe that there was devilry in it—I accosted him in Latin—whilk it is maist becoming to speak to aught whilk taketh upon it as a goblin—and conjured him *in nomine*, and so forth, with such words as my poor learning could furnish of a suddenty, whilk, to say truth, were not so many, nor altogether so purely latineezed as

¹ See Antique Coins found in Zetland. Note 39.

might have been had I not been few years at college and many at the pleugh. Well, sirs, he started at first, as one that heareth that which he expects not; but presently recovering himself, he wawls on me with his grey een, like a wild cat, and opens his mouth, whilk resembled the mouth of an oven, for the deil a tongue he had in it, that I could spy, and took upon his ugly self altogether the air and bearing of a bull-dog, whilk I have seen loosed at a fair upon a mad staig;¹ whereupon I was something daunted, and withdrew myself to call upon sister Baby, who fears neither dog nor devil when there is in question the little penny siller. And truly she raise to the fray as I hae seen the Lindsays and Ogilvies bristle up, when Donald MacDonnoch, or the like, made a start down frae the Highlands on the braes of Islay. But an auld useless carline, called Tronda Dronsdaughter — they might call her Drone the sell of her, without farther addition — flung herself right in my sister's gate, and yelloched and skirled, that you would have thought her a whole generation of hounds; whereupon I judged it best to make ae yoking of it, and stop the pleugh until I got my sister's assistance; whilk when I had done, and we mounted the stair to the apartment in which the said dwarf, devil, or other apparition was to be seen, dwarf, horn, and siller were as clean gane as if the cat had lickit the place where I saw them.'

Here Triptolemus paused in his extraordinary narration, while the rest of the party looked upon each other in surprise, and the Udaller muttered to Claud Halcro — 'By all tokens, this must have been either the devil or Nicholas Strumpfer; and, if it were him, he is more of a goblin than e'er I gave him credit for, and shall be apt to rate him as such in future.' Then addressing the factor, he inquired — 'Saw ye nought how this dwarf of yours parted company?'

'As I shall answer it, no,' replied Triptolemus, with a cautious look around him, as if daunted by the recollection; 'neither I nor Baby, who had her wits more about her, not having seen this unseemly vision, could perceive any way by whilk he made evasion. Only Tronda said she saw him flee forth of the window of the west roundel of the auld house upon a dragon, as she averred. But, as the dragon is held a fabulous animal, I suld pronounce her averment to rest upon *deceptio visus*.'

'But, may we not ask farther,' said Brenda, stimulated by curiosity to know as much of her cousin Norna's family as was

¹ Young unbroken horse.

possible, 'how all this operated upon Master Yellowley so as to occasion his being in this place at so unseasonable an hour?'

'Seasonable it must be, Mistress Brenda, since it brought us into your sweet company,' answered Claud Halcro, whose mercurial brain far outstripped the slow conceptions of the agriculturist, and who became impatient of being so long silent. 'To say the truth, it was I, Mistress Brenda, who recommended to our friend the factor, whose house I chanced to call at just after this mischance — and where, by the way, owing doubtless to the hurry of their spirits, I was but poorly received — to make a visit to our other friend at Fitful Head, well judging from certain points of the story, at which my other and more particular friend than either (looking at Magnus) may chance to form a guess, that they who break a head are the best to find a plaster. And as our friend the factor scrupled travelling on horseback, in respect of some tumbles from our ponies —'

'Which are incarnate devils,' said Triptolemus, aloud, muttering under his breath, 'like every live thing that I have found in Zetland.'

'Well, Fowd,' continued Halcro, 'I undertook to carry him to Fitful Head in my little boat, which Giles and I can manage as if it were an admiral's barge full manned; and Master Triptolemus Yellowley will tell you how seaman-like I piloted him to the little haven, within a quarter of a mile of Norna's dwelling.'

'I wish to Heaven you had brought me as safe back again,' said the factor.

'Why, to be sure,' replied the minstrel, 'I am, as glorious John says —'

A daring pilot in extremity,
Pleased with the danger when the waves go high.
I seek the storm; but, for a calm unfit,
Will steer too near the sands, to show my wit.'

'I showed little wit in entrusting myself to your charge,' said Triptolemus; 'and you still less when you upset the boat at the throat of the voe, as you call it, when even the poor bairn, that was mair than half-drowned, told you that you were carrying too much sail; and then ye wad fasten the rape to the bit stick on the boat-side, that ye might have time to play on the fiddle.'

'What!' said the Udaller, 'make fast the sheets to the thwart? a most unseasonable practice, Claud Halcro.'

'And sae came of it,' replied the agriculturist; 'for the neist blast — and we are never lang without ane in these parts — whomled us as a gudewife would whomle a bowie, and ne'er a thing wad Maister Halero save but his fiddle. The puir bairn swam out like a water-spaniel, and I swattered hard for my life, wi' the help of ane of the oars; and here we are, comfortless creatures, that, till a good wind blew you here, had naething to eat but a mouthful of Norway rusk, that has mair sawdust than rye-meal in it, and tastes liker turpentine than onything else.'

'I thought we heard you very merry,' said Brenda, 'as we came along the beach.'

'Ye heard a fiddle, Mistress Brenda,' said the factor; 'and maybe ye may think there can be nae dearth, miss, where that is skirling. But then it was Maister Claud Halero's fiddle, whilk, I am apt to think, wad skirl at his father's death-bed, or at his ain, sae lang as his fingers could pinch the thairm. And it was nae sma' aggravation to my misfortune to have him humming a' sorts of springs — Norse and Scots, Highland and Lawland, English and Italian, in my lug, as if nothing had happened that was amiss, and we all in such stress and perplexity.'

'Why, I told you sorrow would never right the boat, factor,' said the thoughtless minstrel, 'and I did my best to make you merry; if I failed, it was neither my fault nor my fiddle's. I have drawn the bow across it before glorious John Dryden himself.'

'I will hear no stories about glorious John Dryden,' answered the Udaller, who dreaded Halero's narratives as much as Triptolemus did his music — 'I will hear nought of him, but one story to every three bowls of punch — it is our old paction, you know. But tell me, instead, what said Norna to you about your errand?'

'Ay, there was anither fine upshot,' said Master Yellowley. 'She wadna look at us or listen to us; only she bothered our acquaintance, Master Halero here, who thought he could have sae much to say wi' her, with about a score of questions about your family and household estate, Master Magnus Troil; and when she had gotten a' she wanted out of him, I thought she wad hae dung him ower the craig, like an empty peacod.'

'And for yourself?' said the Udaller.

'She wadna listen to my story, nor hear sae much as a word that I had to say,' answered Triptolemus; 'and sae much for them that seek to witches and familiar spirits!'

'You needed not to have had recourse to Norna's wisdom, Master Factor,' said Minna, not unwilling, perhaps, to stop his railing against the friend who had so lately rendered her service: 'the youngest child in Orkney could have told you that fairy treasures, if they are not wisely employed for the good of others, as well as of those to whom they are imparted, do not dwell long with their possessors.'

'Your humble servant to command, Mistress Minnie,' said Triptolemus; 'I thank ye for the hint, and I am blithe that you have gotten your wits — I beg pardon, I meant your health — into the barn-yard again. For the treasure, I neither used nor abused it — they that live in the house with my sister Baby wad find it hard to do either! — and as for speaking of it, whilk they say muckle offends them whom we in Scotland call Good Neighbours, and you call Drows, the face of the auld Norse kings on the coins themselves might have spoken as much about it as ever I did.'

'The factor,' said Claud Halcro, not unwilling to seize the opportunity of revenging himself on Triptolemus for disgracing his seamanship and disparaging his music — 'the factor was so scrupulous as to keep the thing quiet even from his master, the Lord Chamberlain; but, now that the matter has ta'en wind, he is likely to have to account to his master for that which is no longer in his possession; for the Lord Chamberlain will be in no hurry, I think, to believe the story of the dwarf. Neither do I think (winking to the Udaller) that Norna gave credit to a word of so odd a story; and I daresay that was the reason that she received us, I must needs say, in a very dry manner. I rather think she knew that Triptolemus, our friend here, had found some other hiding-hole for the money, and that the story of the goblin was all his own invention. For my part, I will never believe there was such a dwarf to be seen as the creature Master Yellowley describes until I set my own eyes on him.'

'Then you may do so at this moment,' said the factor; 'for, by ——' he muttered a deep asseveration as he sprung on his feet in great horror, 'there the creature is!'

All turned their eyes in the direction in which he pointed, and saw the hideous, misshapen figure of Pacolet, with his eyes fixed and glaring at them through the smoke. He had stolen upon their conversation unperceived, until the factor's eye lighted upon him in the manner we have described. There was something so ghastly in his sudden and unexpected appear-

ance that even the Udaller, to whom his form was familiar, could not help starting. Neither pleased with himself for having testified this degree of emotion, however slight, nor with the dwarf who had given cause to it, Magnus asked him sharply what was his business there. Pacolet replied by producing a letter, which he gave to the Udaller, uttering a sound resembling the word 'shogh.'¹

'That is the Highlandman's language,' said the Udaller; 'didst thou learn that, Nicholas, when you lost your own?'

Pacolet nodded, and signed to him to read his letter.

'That is no such easy matter by firelight, my good friend,' replied the Udaller; 'but it may concern Minna, and we must try.'

Brenda offered her assistance, but the Udaller answered, 'No — no, my girl; Norna's letters must be read by those they are written to. Give the knave, Strumpfer, a drop of brandy the while, though he little deserves it at my hands, considering the grin with which he sent the good Nantz down the crag this morning, as if it had been as much ditch-water.'

'Will you be this honest gentleman's cup-bearer — his Ganymede, friend Yellowley, or shall I?' said Claud Halero aside to the factor; while Magnus Troil, having carefully wiped his spectacles, which he produced from a large copper case, had disposed them on his nose and was studying the epistle of Norna.

'I would not touch him, or go near him, for all the Curse of Gowrie,' said the factor, whose fears were by no means entirely removed, though he saw that the dwarf was received as a creature of flesh and blood by the rest of the company; 'but I pray you to ask him what he has done with my horn of coins?'

The dwarf, who heard the question, threw back his head and displayed his enormous throat, pointing to it with his finger.

'Nay, if he has swallowed them, there is no more to be said,' replied the factor; 'only I hope he will thrive on them as a cow on wet clover. He is dame Norna's servant, it's like — such man, such mistress! But if theft and witchcraft are to go unpunished in this land, my lord must find another factor; for I have been used to live in a country where men's worldly gear was keepit from infang and outfang thief, as well as their immortal souls from the claws of the deil and his cummers — sein and save us!'

¹ In Gaelic, *there*.

The agriculturist was perhaps the less reserved in expressing his complaints that the Udaller was for the present out of hearing, having drawn Claud Halero apart into another corner of the hut.

'And tell me,' said he, 'friend Halero, what errand took thee to Sumburgh, since I reckon it was scarce the mere pleasure of sailing in partnership with yonder barnacle!'

'In faith, Fowd,' said the bard, 'and if you will have the truth, I went to speak to Norna on your affairs.'

'On my affairs?' replied the Udaller; 'on what affairs of mine?'

'Just touching your daughter's health. I heard that Norna refused your message, and would not see Eric Scambester. "Now," said I to myself, "I have scarce joyed in meat, or drink, or music, or aught else, since Jarto Minna has been so ill; and I may say, literally as well as figuratively, that my day and night have been made sorrowful to me." In short, I thought I might have some more interest with old Norna than another, as Scalds and wise women were always accounted something akin; and I undertook the journey with the hope to be of some use to my old friend and his lovely daughter.'

'And it was most kindly done of you, good, warm-hearted Claud,' said the Udaller, shaking him warmly by the hand: 'I ever said you showed the good old Norse heart amongst all thy fiddling and thy folly. Tut, man, never wince for the matter, but be blithe that thy heart is better than thy head. Well—and I warrant you got no answer from Norna?'

'None to purpose,' replied Claud Halero; 'but she held me close to question about Minna's illness, too; and I told her how I had met her abroad the other morning in no very good weather, and how her sister Brenda said she had hurt her foot—in short, I told her all and everything I knew.'

'And something more besides, it would seem,' said the Udaller; 'for I, at least, never heard before that Minna had hurt herself.'

'O, a scratch!—a mere scratch!' said the old man; 'but I was startled about it—terrified lest it had been the bite of a dog, or some hurt from a venomous thing. I told all to Norna, however.'

'And what,' answered the Udaller, 'did she say, in the way of reply?'

'She bade me begone about my business, and told me that the issue would be known at the Kirkwall fair; and said just

the like to this noodle of a factor; it was all that either of us got for our labour,' said Halero.

'That is strange,' said Magnus. 'My kinswoman writes me in this letter not to fail going thither with my daughters. This fair runs strongly in her head; one would think she intended to lead the market, and yet she has nothing to buy or to sell there that I know of. And so you came away as wise as you went, and swamped your boat at the mouth of the voe!'

'Why, how could I help it?' said the poet. 'I had set the boy to steer, and as the flaw came suddenly off shore, I could not let go the tack and play on the fiddle at the same time. But it is all well enough — salt-water never harmed Zetlander, so as he could get out of it, and, as Heaven would have it, we were within man's depth of the shore, and chancing to find this skeo, we should have done well enough, with shelter and fire, and are much better than well with your good cheer and good company. But it wears late, and Night and Day must be both as sleepy as old Midnight can make them. There is an inner crib here, where the fishers slept — somewhat fragrant with the smell of their fish, but that is wholesome. They shall bestow themselves there, with the help of what cloaks you have, and then we will have one cup of brandy, and one stave of glorious John, or some little trifle of my own, and so sleep as sound as cobblers.'

'Two glasses of brandy, if you please,' said the Udaller, 'if our stores do not run dry; but not a single stave of glorious John, or of any one else to-night.'

And this being arranged and executed agreeably to the peremptory pleasure of the Udaller, the whole party consigned themselves to slumber for the night, and on the next day departed for their several habitations, Claud Halero having previously arranged with the Udaller that he would accompany him and his daughters on their proposed visit to Kirkwall.

CHAPTER XXXI

By this hand, thou think'st me as far in the devil's book as thou and Falstaff, for obduracy and persistency. Let the end try the man. . . .
Albeit I could tell to thee (as to one it pleases me, for fault of a better, to call my friend), I could be sad, and sad indeed too.

Henry IV. Part II.

WE must now change the scene from Zetland to Orkney, and request our readers to accompany us to the ruins of an elegant, though ancient, structure called the Earl's Palace. These remains, though much dilapidated, still exist in the neighbourhood of the massive and venerable pile which Norwegian devotion dedicated to St. Magnus the Martyr, and, being contiguous to the Bishop's Palace, which is also ruinous, the place is impressive, as exhibiting vestiges of the mutations both in church and state which have affected Orkney, as well as countries more exposed to such convulsions. Several parts of these ruinous buildings might be selected (under suitable modifications) as the model of a Gothic mansion, provided architects would be contented rather to imitate what is really beautiful in that species of building than to make a medley of the caprices of the order, confounding the military, ecclesiastical, and domestic styles of all ages at random, with additional fantasies and combinations of their own device, 'all formed out of the builder's brain.'

The Earl's Palace forms three sides of an oblong square, and has, even in its ruins, the air of an elegant yet massive structure, uniting, as was usual in the residence of feudal princes, the character of a palace and of a castle. A great banqueting-hall, communicating with several large rounds, or projecting turret-rooms, and having at either end an immense chimney, testifies the ancient Northern hospitality of the Earls of Orkney, and communicates, almost in the modern fashion, with a gallery or withdrawing-room of corresponding dimensions, and having, like the hall, its projecting turrets. The lordly hall itself is

lighted by a fine Gothic window of shafted stone at one end, and is entered by a spacious and elegant staircase, consisting of three flights of stone steps. The exterior ornaments and proportions of the ancient building are also very handsome; but, being totally unprotected, this remnant of the pomp and grandeur of earls, who assumed the license as well as the dignity of petty sovereigns, is now fast crumbling to decay, and has suffered considerably since the date of our story.

With folded arms and downcast looks, the pirate Cleveland was pacing slowly the ruined hall which we have just described—a place of retirement which he had probably chosen because it was distant from public resort. His dress was considerably altered from that which he usually wore in Zetland, and seemed a sort of uniform, richly laced, and exhibiting no small quantity of embroidery; a hat with a plume, and a small sword very handsomely mounted, then the constant companion of every one who assumed the rank of a gentleman, showed his pretensions to that character. But if his exterior was so far improved, it seemed to be otherwise with his health and spirits. He was pale, and had lost both the fire of his eyes and the vivacity of his step, and his whole appearance indicated melancholy of mind, or suffering of body, or a combination of both evils.

As Cleveland thus paced these ancient ruins, a young man, of a light and slender form, whose showy dress seemed to have been studied with care, yet exhibited more extravagance than judgment or taste, whose manner was a janty affectation of the free and easy rake of the period, and the expression of whose countenance was lively, with a cast of effrontery, tripped up the staircase, entered the hall, and presented himself to Cleveland, who merely nodded to him, and pulling his hat deeper over his brows, resumed his solitary and discontented promenade.

The stranger adjusted his own hat, nodded in return, took snuff, with the air of a *petit maitre*, from a richly chased gold box, offered it to Cleveland as he passed, and being repulsed rather coldly, replaced the box in his pocket, folded his arms in his turn, and stood looking with fixed attention on his motions whose solitude he had interrupted. At length Cleveland stopped short, as if impatient of being longer the subject of his observation, and said abruptly, 'Why can I not be left alone for half an hour, and what the devil is it that you want?'

'I am glad you spoke first,' answered the stranger, carelessly; 'I was determined to know whether you were Clement Cleveland or Cleveland's ghost and they say ghosts never take the

first word, so I now set it down for yourself in life and limb; and here is a fine old hurly-house you have found out for an owl to hide himself in at mid-day, or a ghost to revisit the pale glimpses of the moon, as the divine Shakspeare say:—

‘Well—well,’ answered Cleveland, abruptly, ‘your jest is made, and now let us have your earnest.’

‘In earnest, then, Captain Cleveland,’ replied his companion, ‘I think you know me for your friend.’

‘I am content to suppose so,’ said Cleveland.

‘It is more than supposition,’ replied the young man: ‘I have proved it—proved it both here and elsewhere.’

‘Well—well,’ answered Cleveland, ‘admit you have been always a friendly fellow—and what then?’

‘Well, well—and what then!’ replied the other; ‘this is but a brief way of thanking folk. Look you, captain, here is Benson, Barlowe, Dick Fletcher, and a few others of us who wished you well, have kept your old comrade Captain Goffe in these seas upon the look-out for you, when he and Hawkins, and the greater part of the ship’s company, would fain have been down on the Spanish Main, and at the old trade.’

‘And I wish to God that you had all gone about your business,’ said Cleveland, ‘and left me to my fate.’

‘Which would have been to be informed against and hanged, captain, the first time that any of these Dutch or English rascals whom you have lightened of their cargoes came to set their eyes upon you; and no place more likely to meet with seafaring men than in these islands. And here, to screen you from such a risk, we have been wasting our precious time, till folk are grown very peery; and when we have no more goods or money to spend amongst them, the fellows will be for grabbing the ship.’

‘Well, then, why do you not sail off without me?’ said Cleveland. ‘There has been fair partition, and all have had their share; let all do as they like. I have lost my ship, and having been once a captain, I will not go to sea under command of Goffe or any other man. Besides, you know well enough that both Hawkins and he bear me ill-will for keeping them from sinking the Spanish brig, with the poor devils of negroes on board.’

‘Why, what the foul fiend is the matter with thee!’ said his companion. ‘Are you Clement Cleveland, our own old true hearted Clem of the Cleugh, and do you talk of being afraid of Hawkins and Goffe, and a score of such fellows, when you have myself, and Barlowe, and Dick Fletcher at your back? When

was it we deserted you, either in council or in fight, that you should be afraid of our finching now? And as for serving under Goffe, I hope it is no new thing for gentlemen of fortune who are going on the account to change a captain now and then! Let us alone for that — captain you shall be; for death rock me asleep if I serve under that fellow Goffe, who is as very a bloodhound as ever sucked bitch! No, no, I thank you — my captain must have a little of the gentleman about him, howsoever. Besides, you know, it was you who first dipped my hands in the dirty water, and turned me from a stroller by land to a rover by sea.'

'Alas, poor Bunce!' said Cleveland, 'you owe me little thanks for that service.'

'That is as you take it,' replied Bunce; 'for my part, I see no harm in levying contributions on the public either one way or t'other. But I wish you would forget that name of Bunce and call me Altamont, as I have often desired you to do. I hope a gentleman of the roving trade has as good a right to have an *alias* as a stroller, and I never stepped on the boards but what I was Altamont at the least.'

'Well, then, Jack Altamont,' replied Cleveland, 'since Altamont is the word —'

'Yes, but, captain, *Jack* is not the word, though Altamont be so. Jack Altamont! why, 'tis a velvet coat with paper lace. Let it be Frederick, captain: Frederick Altamont is all of a piece.'

'Frederick be it then, with all my heart,' said Cleveland; 'and pray tell me, which of your names will sound best at the head of the "Last Speech, Confession, and Dying Words of John Bunce, *alias* Frederick Altamont, who was this morning hanged at Execution Dock for the crime of Piracy upon the High Seas"?''

'Faith, I cannot answer that question without another can of grog, captain; so, if you will go down with me to Bet Haldane's on the quay, I will bestow some thought on the matter, with the help of a right pipe of Trinidad. We will have the gallon bowl filled with the best stuff you ever tasted, and I know some smart wenches who will help us to drain it. But you shake your head — you're not i' the vein? Well, then, I will stay with you; for, by this hand, Clem, you shift me not off. Only I will ferret you out of this burrow of old stones, and carry you into sunshine and fair air. Where shall we go?'

'Where you will,' said Cleveland, 'so that you keep out of the way of our own rascals and all others.'

'Why, then,' replied Bunce, 'you and I will go up to the Hill of Whitford, which overlooks the town, and walk together as gravely and honestly as a pair of well-employed attorneys.'

As they proceeded to leave the ruinous castle, Bunce, turning back to look at it, thus addressed his companion :

'Hark ye, captain, dost thou know who last inhabited this old cockloft ?'

'An earl of the Orkneys, they say,' replied Cleveland.

'And are you avised what death he died of?' said Bunce; 'for I have heard that it was of a tight neck-collar — a hempen fever, or the like.'

'The people here do say,' replied Cleveland, 'that his lordship, some hundred years ago, had the mishap to become acquainted with the nature of a loop and a leap in the air.'

'Why, la ye there now!' said Bunce; 'there was some credit in being hanged in those days, and in such worshipful company. And what might his lordship have done to deserve such promotion ?'

'Plundered the liege subjects, they say,' replied Cleveland; 'slain and wounded them, fired upon his Majesty's flag, and so forth.'

'Near akin to a gentleman rover, then,' said Bunce, making a theatrical bow towards the old building; 'and, therefore, my most potent, grave, and reverend Signior Earl, I crave leave to call you my loving cousin, and bid you most heartily adieu. I leave you in the good company of rats and mice, and so forth, and I carry with me an honest gentleman, who, having of late had no more heart than a mouse, is now desirous to run away from his profession and friends like a rat, and would therefore be a most fitting denizen of your earlship's palace.'

'I would advise you not to speak so loud, my good friend Frederick Altamont, or John Bunce,' said Cleveland; 'when you were on the stage, you might safely rant as loud as you listed; but, in your present profession, of which you are so fond, every man speaks under correction of the yard-arm and a running noose.'

The comrades left the little town of Kirkwall in silence, and ascended the Hill of Whitford, which raises its brow of dark heath, uninterrupted by inclosures or cultivation of any kind, to the northward of the ancient burgh of St. Magnus. The plain at the foot of the hill was already occupied by numbers of

persons who were engaged in making preparations for the fair of St. Olla, to be held upon the ensuing day, and which forms a general rendezvous to all the neighbouring islands of Orkney, and is even frequented by many persons from the more distant archipelago of Zetland. It is, in the words of the proclamation, 'A free mercat and fair, holden at the good burgh of Kirkwall on the third of August, being St. Olla's day,' and continuing for an indefinite space thereafter, extending from three days to a week and upwards. The fair is of great antiquity, and derives its name from Olaus, Olave, Ollaw, the celebrated monarch of Norway, who, rather by the edge of his sword than any milder argument, introduced Christianity into these isles, and was respected as the patron of Kirkwall some time before he shared that honour with St. Magnus the Martyr.

It was no part of Cleveland's purpose to mingle in the busy scene which was here going on; and, turning their route to the left, they soon ascended into undisturbed solitude, save where the grouse,¹ more plentiful in Orkney, perhaps, than in any other part of the British dominions, rose in covey, and went off before them. Having continued to ascend till they had well-nigh reached the summit of the conical hill, both turned round, as with one consent, to look at and admire the prospect beneath.

The lively bustle which extended between the foot of the hill and the town gave life and variety to that part of the scene; then was seen the town itself, out of which arose, like a great mass, superior in proportion as it seemed to the whole burgh, the ancient cathedral of St. Magnus, of the heaviest order of Gothic architecture, but grand, solemn, and stately, the work of a distant age and of a powerful hand. The quay, with the shipping, lent additional vivacity to the scene; and not only the whole beautiful bay, which lies betwixt the promontories of Inganess and Quanterness, at the bottom of which Kirkwall is situated, but all the sea, so far as visible, and in particular the whole strait betwixt the island of Shapinsha and that called Pomona, or the Mainland, was covered and enlivened by a variety of boats and small vessels, freighted from distant islands to convey passengers or merchandise to the fair of St. Olla.

Having attained the point by which this fair and busy prospect was most completely commanded, each of the strangers, in seaman fashion, had recourse to his spy-glass, to assist the naked eye in considering the Bay of Kirkwall and the numerous

¹ See Note 40.

vessels by which it was traversed. But the attention of the two companions seemed to be arrested by different objects. That of Bunce, or Altamont, as he chose to call himself, was riveted to the armed sloop, where, conspicuous by her square rigging and length of beam, with the English jack and pennon, which they had the precaution to keep flying, she lay among the merchant vessels, as distinguished from them by the trim neatness of her appearance as a trained soldier amongst a crowd of clowns.

'Yonder she lies,' said Bunce; 'I wish to God she was in the Bay of Honduras — you, captain, on the quarter-deck, I your lieutenant, and Fletcher quarter-master, and fifty stout fellows under us — I should not wish to see these blasted heaths and rocks again for a while! And captain you shall soon be. The old brute Goffe gets drunk as a lord every day, swaggers, and shoots, and cuts among the crew; and, besides, he has quarrelled with the people here so damnably that they will scarce let water or provisions go on board of us, and we expect an open breach every day.'

As Bunce received no answer, he turned short round on his companion, and, perceiving his attention otherwise engaged, exclaimed — 'What the devil is the matter with you? or what can you see in all that trumpery small craft, which is only loaded with stock-fish, and ling, and smoked geese, and tubs of butter that is worse than tallow? — the cargoes of the whole lumped together would not be worth the flash of a pistol. No — no, give me such a chase as we might see from the mast-head off the island of Trinidad. Your Don, rolling as deep in the water as a grampus, deep-loaden with rum, sugar, and bales of tobacco, and all the rest ingots, moidores, and gold dust; then set all sail, clear the deck, stand to quarters, up with the Jolly Roger;¹ we near her — we make her out to be well manned and armed —'

'Twenty guns on her lower deck,' said Cleveland.

'Forty, if you will,' retorted Bunce, 'and we have but ten mounted — never mind. The Don blazes away — never mind yet, my brave lads — run her alongside, and on board with you — to work, with your grenadoes, your cutlasses, pole-axes, and pistols. The Don cries "*Misericordia*," and we share the cargo without *co licencio*, *Seignior*!'

'By my faith,' said Cleveland, 'thou takest so kindly to the

¹ The pirates gave this name to the black flag, which, with many horrible devices to enhance its terrors, was their favourite ensign.

trade that all the world may see that no honest man was spoiled when you were made a pirate. But you shall not prevail on me to go farther in the devil's road with you ; for you know yourself that what is got over his back is spent — you wot how. In a week, or a month at most, the rum and the sugar are out, the bales of tobacco have become smoke, the moidores, ingots, and gold dust have got out of our hands into those of the quiet, honest, conscientious folks who dwell at Port Royal and elsewhere, wink hard on our trade as long as we have money, but not a jot beyond. Then we have cold looks, and it may be a hint is given to the judge marshal ; for, when our pockets are worth nothing, our honest friends, rather than want, will make money upon our heads. Then comes a high gallows and a short halter, and so dies the gentleman rover. I tell thee, I will leave this trade ; and, when I turn my glass from one of these barks and boats to another, there is not the worst of them which I would not row for life rather than continue to be what I have been. These poor men make the sea a means of honest livelihood and friendly communication between shore and shore, for the mutual benefit of the inhabitants ; but we have made it a road to the ruin of others and to our own destruction here and in eternity. I am determined to turn honest man and use this life no longer !

‘And where will your honesty take up its abode, if it please you ?’ said Bunce. ‘You have broken the laws of every nation, and the hand of the law will detect and crush you wherever you may take refuge. Cleveland, I speak to you more seriously than I am wont to do. I have had my reflections, too ; and they have been bad enough, though they have lasted but a few minutes, to spoil me weeks of joviality. But here is the matter — what can we do but go on as we have done, unless we have a direct purpose of adorning the yard-arm ?’

‘We may claim the benefit of the proclamation to those of our sort who come in and surrender,’ said Cleveland.

‘Umph !’ answered his companion, drily ; ‘the date of that day of grace has been for some time over, and they may take the penalty or grant the pardon at their pleasure. Were I you, I would not put my neck in such a venture.’

‘Why, others have been admitted but lately to favour, and why should not I ?’ said Cleveland.

‘Ay,’ replied his associate, ‘Harry Glasby and some others have been spared ; but Glasby did what was called good service, in betraying his comrades and retaking the “Jolly Fortune” ;

and that I think you would scorn, even to be revenged of the brute Goffe yonder.'

'I would die a thousand times sooner,' said Cleveland.

'I will be sworn for it,' said Bunce; 'and the others were forecastle fellows — petty larceny rogues, scarce worth the hemp it would have cost to hang them. But your name has stood too high amongst the gentlemen of fortune for you to get off so easily. You are the prime buck of the herd, and will be marked accordingly.'

'And why so, I pray you?' said Cleveland; 'you know well enough my aim, Jack.'

'Frederick, if you please,' said Bunce.

'The devil take your folly! Prithee keep thy wit, and let us be grave for a moment.'

'For a moment — be it so,' said Bunce; 'but I feel the spirit of Altamont coming fast upon me. I have been a grave man for ten minutes already.'

'Be so then for a little longer,' said Cleveland. 'I know, Jack, that you really love me; and, since we have come thus far in this talk, I will trust you entirely. Now tell me, why should I be refused the benefit of this gracious proclamation? I have borne a rough outside, as thou knowest; but, in time of need, I can show the number of lives which I have been the means of saving, the property which I have restored to those who owned it, when, without my intercession, it would have been wantonly destroyed. In short, Bunce, I can show —'

'That you were as gentle a thief as Robin Hood himself,' said Bunce; 'and, for that reason, I, Fletcher, and the better sort among us, love you, as one who saves the character of us gentlemen rovers from utter reprobation. Well, suppose your pardon made out, what are you to do next? — what class in society will receive you? — with whom will you associate? Old Drake, in Queen Bess's time, could plunder Peru and Mexico without a line of commission to show for it, and, blessed be her memory! he was knighted for it on his return. And there was Hal Morgan, the Welshman, nearer our time, in the days of merry King Charles, brought all his gettings home, had his estate and his country house, and who but he? But that is all ended now: once a pirate, and an outcast for ever. The poor devil may go and live, shunned and despised by every one, in some obscure seaport, with such part of his guilty earnings as courtiers and clerks leave him — for pardons do not pass the seals for nothing — and, when he takes his walk along the pier,

if a stranger asks who is the down-looking, swarthy, melancholy man for whom all make way, as if he brought the plague in his person, the answer shall be, that is such a one, the pardoned pirate! No honest man will speak to him, no woman of repute will give him her hand.'

'Your picture is too highly coloured, Jack,' said Cleveland, suddenly interrupting his friend: 'there are women — there is one, at least, that would be true to her lover, even if he were what you have described.'

Bunce was silent for a moment, and looked fixedly at his friend. 'By my soul!' he said, at length, 'I begin to think myself a conjurer. Unlikely as it all was, I could not help suspecting from the beginning that there was a girl in the case. Why, this is worse than Prince Volscius in love — ha! ha! ha!'

'Laugh as you will,' said Cleveland, 'it is true: there is a maiden who is contented to love me, pirate as I am; and I will fairly own to you, Jack, that, though I have often at times detested our roving life, and myself for following it, yet I doubt if I could have found resolution to make the break which I have now resolved on but for her sake.'

'Why, then, God-a-mercy!' replied Bunce, 'there is no speaking sense to a madman; and love in one of your trade, captain, is little better than lunacy. The girl must be a rare creature, for a wise man to risk hanging for her. But, hark ye, may she not be a little touched, as well as yourself? and is it not sympathy that has done it? She cannot be one of our ordinary cockatrices, but a girl of conduct and character.'

'Both are as undoubted as that she is the most beautiful and bewitching creature whom the eye ever opened upon,' answered Cleveland.

'And she loves thee, knowing thee, most noble captain, to be a commander among those gentlemen of fortune whom the vulgar call pirates?'

'Even so — I am assured of it,' said Cleveland.

'Why, then,' answered Bunce, 'she is either mad in good earnest, as I said before, or she does not know what a pirate is.'

'You are right in the last point,' replied Cleveland. 'She has been bred in such remote simplicity, and utter ignorance of what is evil, that she compares our occupation with that of the old Norsemen, who swept sea and haven with their victorious galleys, established colonies, conquered countries, and took the name of sea-kings.'

'And a better one it is than that of pirate, and comes

much to the same purpose, I daresay,' said Bunce. 'But this must be a mettled wench! Why did you not bring her aboard? Methinks it was pity to baulk her fancy.'

'And do you think,' said Cleveland, 'that I could so utterly play the part of a fallen spirit as to avail myself of her enthusiastic error, and bring an angel of beauty and innocence acquainted with such a hell as exists on board of yonder infernal ship of ours? I tell you, my friend, that, were all my former sins doubled in weight and in dye, such a villany would have outglared and outweighed them all.'

'Why, then, Captain Cleveland,' said his confidant, 'methinks it was but a fool's part to come hither at all. The news must one day have gone abroad that the celebrated pirate Captain Cleveland, with his good sloop the "Revenge," had been lost on the Mainland of Zetland, and all hands perished; so you would have remained hid both from friend and enemy, and might have married your pretty Zetlander, and converted your sash and scarf into fishing-nets, and your cutlass into a harpoon, and swept the seas for fish instead of florins.'

'And so I had determined,' said the captain; 'but a jagger, as they call them here, like a meddling, peddling thief as he is, brought down intelligence to Zetland of your lying here, and I was fain to set off, to see if you were the consort of whom I had told them, long before I thought of leaving the roving trade.'

'Ay,' said Bunce, 'and so far you judged well. For, as you had heard of our being at Kirkwall, so we should have soon learned that you were at Zetland; and some of us for friendship, some for hatred, and some for fear of your playing Harry Glasby upon us, would have come down for the purpose of getting you into our company again.'

'I suspected as much,' said the captain, 'and therefore was fain to decline the courteous offer of a friend who proposed to bring me here about this time. Besides, Jack, I recollected that, as you say, my pardon will not pass the seals without money; my own was waxing low — no wonder, thou knowest I was never a churl of it; and so —'

'And so you came for your share of the cobs?' replied his friend. 'It was wisely done; and we shared honourably; so far Goffe has acted up to articles, it must be allowed. But keep your purpose of leaving him close in your breast, for I dread his playing you some dog's trick or other; for he certainly thought himself sure of your share, and will hardly forgive your coming alive to disappoint him.'

'I fear him not,' said Cleveland, 'and he knows that well. I would I were as well clear of the consequences of having been his comrade as I hold myself to be of all those which may attend his ill-will. Another unhappy job I may be troubled with: I hurt a young fellow, who has been my plague for some time, in an unhappy brawl that chanced the morning I left Zetland.'

'Is he dead?' asked Bunce. 'It is a more serious question here than it would be on the Grand Caimains or the Bahama Isles, where a brace or two of fellows may be shot in a morning, and no more heard of, or asked about, them than if they were so many wood-pigeons. But here it may be otherwise; so I hope you have not made your friend immortal.'

'I hope not,' said the captain, 'though my anger has been fatal to those who have given me less provocation. To say the truth, I was sorry for the lad notwithstanding, and especially as I was forced to leave him in mad keeping.'

'In mad keeping!' said Bunce; 'why, what means that?'

'You shall hear,' replied his friend. 'In the first place, you are to know, this young man came suddenly on me while I was trying to gain Minna's ear for a private interview before I set sail, that I might explain my purpose to her. Now, to be broken in on by the accursed rudeness of this young fellow at such a moment——'

'The interruption deserved death,' said Bunce, 'by all the laws of love and honour!'

'A truce with your ends of plays, Jack, and listen one moment. The brisk youth thought proper to retort, when I commanded him to be gone. I am not, thou knowest, very patient, and enforced my commands with a blow, which he returned as roundly. We struggled, till I became desirous that we should part at any rate, which I could only effect by a stroke of my poniard, which, according to old use, I have, thou knowest, always about me. I had scarce done this when I repented; but there was no time to think of anything save escape and concealment, for, if the house rose on me, I was lost; as the fiery old man, who is head of the family, would have done justice on me had I been his brother. I took the body hastily on my shoulders to carry it down to the sea-shore, with the purpose of throwing it into a riva, as they call them, or chasun of great depth, where it would have been long enough in being discovered. This done, I intended to jump into the boat which I had lying ready, and set sail for Kirkwall. But,

as I was walking hastily towards the beach with my burden, the poor young fellow groaned, and so apprised me that the wound had not been instantly fatal. I was by this time well concealed amongst the rocks, and, far from desiring to complete my crime, I laid the young man on the ground, and was doing what I could to staunch the blood, when suddenly an old woman stood before me. She was a person whom I had frequently seen while in Zetland, and to whom they ascribe the character of a sorceress, or, as the negroes say, an Obi woman. She demanded the wounded man of me, and I was too much pressed for time to hesitate in complying with her request. More she was about to say to me, when we heard the voice of a silly old man, belonging to the family, singing at some distance. She then pressed her finger on her lip as a sign of secrecy, whistled very low, and a shapeless, deformed brute of a dwarf coming to her assistance, they carried the wounded man into one of the caverns with which the place abounds, and I got to my boat and to sea with all expedition. If that old hag be, as they say, connected with the King of the Air, she favoured me that morning with a turn of her calling; for not even the West Indian tornadoes, which we have weathered together, made a wilder racket than the squall that drove me so far out of our course that, without a pocket-compass, which I chanced to have about me, I should never have recovered the Fair Isle, for which we run, and where I found a brig which brought me to this place. But, whether the old woman meant me weal or woe, here we came at length in safety from the sea, and here I remain in doubts and difficulties of more kinds than one.

'Oh, the devil take the Sumburgh Head,' said Bunce, 'or whatever they call the rock that you knocked our clever little "Revenge" against!'

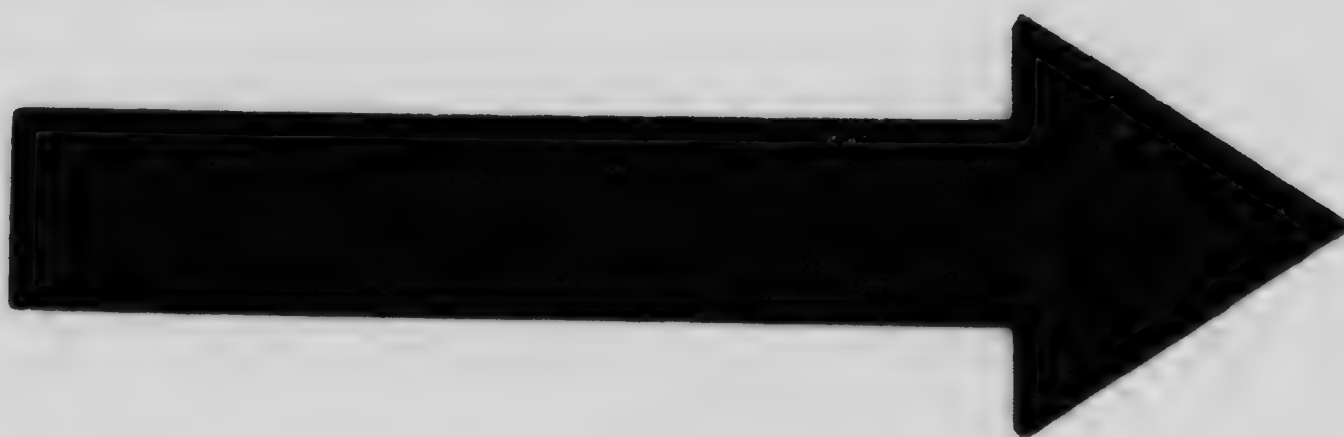
'Do not say I knocked her on the rock,' said Cleveland: 'have I not told you fifty times, if the cowards had not taken to their boat, though I showed them the danger, and told them they would all be swamped, which happened the instant they cast off the painter, she would have been afloat at this moment! Had they stood by me and the ship, their lives would have been saved; had I gone with them, mine would have been lost; who can say which is for the best?'

'Well,' replied his friend, 'I know your case now, and can the better help and advise. I will be true to you, Clement, as the blade to the hilt; but I cannot think that you should leave

us. As the old Scottish song says, "Wae 's my heart that we should sunder!" But come, you will aboard with us to-day, at any rate!

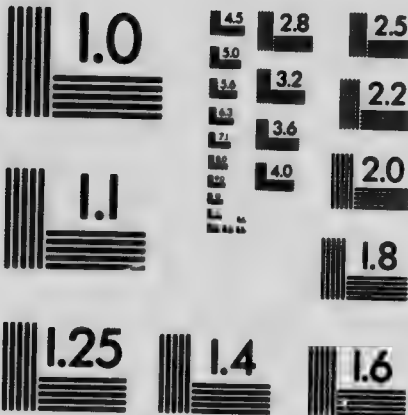
'I have no other place of refuge,' said Cleveland, with a sigh.

He the nonce more ran his eyes over the bay, directed his spy-glass upon several of the vessels which traversed its surface, in hopes, doubtless, of discerning the vessel of Magnus Troil, and then followed his companion down the hill in silence.



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CHAPTER XXXII

I strive like to the vessel in the tide-way,
Which, lacking favouring breeze, hath not the power,
To stem the powerful current. Even so,
Resolving daily to forsake my vices,
Habits, strong circumstance, renew'd temptation,
Sweep me to sea again. O heavenly breath,
Fill thou my sails, and aid the feeble vessel,
Which ne'er can reach the blessed port without thee !

'Tis Odds when Evens meet.

CLEVELAND, with his friend Bunce, descended the hill for a time in silence, until at length the latter renewed their conversation.

'You have taken this fellow's wound more on your conscience than you need, captain : I have known you do more, and think less on 't.'

'Not on such slight provocation, Jack,' replied Cleveland. 'Besides, the lad saved my life ; and, say that I requited him the favour, still we should not have met on such evil terms ; but I trust that he may receive aid from that woman, who has certainly strange skill in simples.'

'And over simpletons, captain,' said his friend, 'in which class I must e'en put you down, if you think more on this subject. That you should be made a fool of by a young woman, why it is many an honest man's case ; but to puzzle your pate about the mummeries of an old one is far too great a folly to indulge a friend in. Talk to me of your Minna, since you so call her, as much as you will ; but you have no title to trouble your faithful squire-errant with your old mumping magician. And now here we are once more amongst the booths and tents which these good folk are pitching ; let us look, and see whether we may not find some fun and frolic amongst them. In merry England, now, you would have seen, on such an occasion, two or three bands of strollers, as many fire-eaters and conjurers, as many shows of wild beasts ; but, amongst these grave folks, there is nothing but what savours of business and

of commodity — no, not so much as a single squall from my merry gossip Punch and his rib Joan.'

As Bunce thus spoke, Cleveland cast his eyes on some very gay clothes, which, with other articles, hung out upon one of the booths, that had a good deal more of ornament and exterior decoration than the rest. There was in front a small sign of canvas painted, announcing the variety of goods which the owner of the booth, Bryce Snailsfoot, had on sale, and the reasonable prices at which he proposed to offer them to the public. For the further gratification of the spectator, the sign bore on the opposite side an emblematic device, resembling our first parents in their vegetable garments, with this legend —

'Poor sinners whom the snake deceives
Are fain to cover them with leaves.
Zetland hath no leaves, 't is true,
Because that trees are none, or few ;
But we have flax and taits of woo',
For linen cloth and wadmaal blue ;
And we have many of foreign knacks
Of finer waft than woo' or flax.
Ye gallanty Lambmas lads,¹ appear,
And bring your Lambmas sisters here,
Bryce Snailsfoot spares not cost or care,
To pleasure every gentle pair.'

While Cleveland was perusing these goodly rhymes, which brought to his mind Claud Halero, to whom, as the poet laureate of the island, ready with his talent alike in the service of the great and small, they probably owed their origin, the worthy proprietor of the booth, having cast his eye upon him, began with hasty and trembling hand to remove some of the garments, which, as the sale did not commence till the ensuing day, he had exposed either for the purpose of airing them or to excite the admiration of the spectators.

'By my word, captain,' whispered Bunce to Cleveland, 'you must have had that fellow under your clutches one day, and he remembers one gripe of your talons and fears another. See how fast he is packing his wares out of sight, so soon as he set eyes on you !'

'His wares !' said Cleveland, on looking more attentively at his proceedings. 'By Heaven, they are my clothes which I left in a chest at Jarlshof when the "Revenge" was lost there. Why, Bryce Snailsfoot, thou thief, dog, and villain, what means this ? Have you not made enough of us by cheap buying and

¹ See Note 41.

dear selling, that you have seized on my trunk and wearing-apparel?

Bryce Snailsfoot, who probably would otherwise not have been willing to see his friend the captain, was now by the violence of his attack obliged to pay attention to him. He first looked down to his little foot-page, by whom, as we have already noticed, he was usually attended, 'Run to the town-courthouse, jarto, and tell the provost and bailies they maun send some of their officers speedily, for here is like to be wild work in the fair.'

So having said, and having seconded his commands by a pat on the shoulder of his messenger, which sent him spinning off the shop as fast as heels could carry him, Bryce Snailsfoot turned to his old acquaintance, and, with that amplification of words and exaggeration of manner which in Scotland is called 'making a phrase,' he ejaculated — 'The Lord be gude to the worthy Captain Cleveland, that we were all so grieved about, returned to relieve our hearts again! Wat have your cheeks been for you (here Bryce wiped his eyes), and blither am I now to see you restored to your sorrowing friends!'

'My sorrowing friends, you rascal!' said Cleveland; 'I will give you better cause for sorrow than ever you had on my account, if you do not tell me instantly where you stole all my clothes.'

'Stole!' ejaculated Bryce, casting up his eyes; 'now the Powers be gude to us! — the poor gentleman has lost his reason in that weary gale of wind.'

'Why, you insolent rascal!' said Cleveland, grasping the cane which he carried, 'do you think to bamboozle me with your impudence? As you would have a whole head on your shoulders, and your bones in a whole skin, one minute longer tell me where the devil you stole my wearing-apparel?'

Bryce Snailsfoot ejaculated once more a repetition of the word 'Stole! Now Heaven be gude to us!' but at the same time, conscious that the captain was likely to be sudden in execution, cast an anxious look to the town, to see the loitering aid of the civil power advance to his rescue.

'I insist on an instant answer,' said the captain, with upraised weapon, 'or else I will beat you to a mummy, and throw out all your frippery upon the common!'

Meanwhile, Master John Bunce, who considered the whole affair as an excellent good jest, and not the worse one that it made Cleveland angry, seized hold of the captain's arm,

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"GIVE ME BACK MY GOGGS, YOU RASCALLY THIEF," SAID CLEVELAND.

From a painting by Keeley Halswelle, A.R.S.A.

and, without any idea of ultimately preventing him from executing his threats, interfered just so much as was necessary to protract a discussion so amusing.

'Nay, let the honest man speak,' he said, 'messmate; he has as fine a cozening face as ever stood on a knavish pair of shoulders, and his are the true flourishes of eloquence, in the course of which men snip the cloth an inch too short. Now, I wish you to consider that you are both of a trade: he measures bales by the yard, and you by the sword; and so I will not have him chopped up till he has had a fair chase.'

'You are a fool!' said Cleveland, endeavouring to shake his friend off. 'Let me go! for, by Heaven, I will be foul of him!'

'Hold him fast,' said the pedlar -- 'good dear merry gentleman, hold him fast!'

'Then say something for yourself,' said Bunce; 'use your gob-box man; patter away, or, by my soul, I will let him loose on you!'

'He says I stole these goods,' said Bryce, who now saw himself run so close that pleading to the charge became inevitable. 'Now, how could I steal them when they are mine by fair and lawful purchase?'

'Purchase! you beggarly vagrant!' said Cleveland; 'from whom did you dare to buy my clothes? or who had the impudence to sell them?'

'Just that worthy professor Mrs. Swertha, the housekeeper at Jarlishof, who acted as your executor,' said the pedlar; 'and a grieved heart she had.'

'And so she was resolved to make a heavy pocket of it, I suppose,' said the captain; 'but how did she dare to sell the things left in her charge?'

'Why, she acted all for the best, good woman!' said the pedlar, anxious to protract the discussion until the arrival of succours; 'and, if you will but hear reason, I am ready to account with you for the chest and all that it holds.'

'Speak out, then, and let us have none of thy damnable evasions,' said Captain Cleveland; 'if you show ever so little purpose of being somewhat honest for once in thy life, I will not beat thee.'

'Why, you see, noble captain,' said the pedlar, and then muttered to himself, 'Plague on Pate Paterson's cripple knee, they will be waiting for him, hirling, useless body!' -- then resumed aloud -- 'the country, ye see, is in great perplexity -- great perplexity, indeed -- much perplexity, truly. There was

your honour missing, that was loved by great and small — clean missing — nowhere to be heard of — a lost man — unquith — dead — defunct !

'You shall find me alive to your cost, you scoundrel !' said the irritated captain.

'Weel, but take patience, ye w'ill not hear a body speak,' said the jagger. 'Then there was the auld Mordaunt Mertoun

'Ha !' said the captain, 'what of him ?'

'Cannot be heard of,' said the pedlar ; 'clean and clear tint — a gone youth — fallen, it is thought, from the craig into the sea : he was aye venturous. I have had dealings with him for furs and feathers, whilk he swapp'd against powder and shot, and the like ; and now he has worn out from among us — clean retired — utterly vanished, like the last puff of an auld wife's tobacco pipe.'

'But what is all this to the captain's clothes, my dear friend ?' said Bunce. 'I must presently beat you myself unless you come to the point.'

'Weel, weel — patience, patience,' said Bryce, waving his hand ; 'you will get all time enough. Weel, there are two folks gane, as I said, forbye the distress at Burgh-Westra about Mistress Minna's sad ailment —'

'Bring not *her* into your buffoonery, sirrah,' said Cleveland, in a tone of anger, not so loud, but far deeper and more concentrated than he had hitherto used ; 'for, if you name her with less than reverence, I will crop the ears out of your head and make you swallow them on the spot !'

'He, he, he !' faintly laughed the jagger ; 'that were a pleasant jest ! you are pleased to be witty. But, to say naething of Burgh-Westra, there is the carle at Jarlishof, he that was the auld Mertoun, Mordaunt's father, whom men thought as fast bound to the place he dwelt in as the Sumburgh Head itsell, naething maun serve him but he is lost as weel as the lave about whom I have spoken. And there's Magnus Troil — wi' favour be he named — taking horse ; and there is pleasant Maister Claud Halero taking boat, whilk he steers worst of any man in Zetland, his head running on rambling rhymes ; and the factor body is on the stir — the Scots factor, him that is aye speaking of dikes and delving, and such unprofitable wark, which has naething of merchandise in it, and he is on the lang trot, too ; so that ye might say, upon a manner, the tae half of the Mainland of Zetland is lost, and the other is running to and fro seeking it — awfu' times !'

Captain Cleveland had subdued his passion and listened to this tirade of the worthy men of merchandise, with impatience indeed, yet not without the hope of hearing something that might concern him. But his companion was now become impatient in his turn. 'The clothes!' he exclaimed — 'the clothes — the clothes — the clothes!' accompanying each repetition of the words with a flourish of his cane, the dexterity of which consisted in coming mighty near the jagger's ears without actually touching them.

The jagger, shrinking from each of these demonstrations, continued to exclaim, 'Nay, sir — good sir — worthy sir — for the clothes — I found the worthy dame in great distress on account of her old maister, and on account of her young maister, and on account of worthy Captain Cleveland, and because of the distress of the worthy fowd's family, and the trouble of the great fowd himself, and because of the factor, and in respect of Claud Halero, and on other accounts and respects. Also we mingled our sorrows and our tears with a bottle, as the holy text hath it, and called in the Ranzelman to our council, a worthy man, Neil Ronaldson by name, who hath a good reputation.'

Here another flourish of the cane came so very near that it partly touched his ear. The jagger started back, and the truth, or that which he desired should be considered as such, bolted from him without more circumlocution; as a cork, after much unnecessary buzzing and fizzing, springs forth from a bottle of spruce beer.

'In brief, what the deil mair would you have of it? The woman sold me the kist of clothes: they are mine by purchase, and that is what I will live and die upon.'

'In other words,' said Cleveland, 'this greedy old hag had the impudence to sell what was none of hers; and you, honest Bryce Snailsfoot, had the assurance to be the purchaser?'

'Ou dear, captain,' said the conscientious pedlar, 'what wad ye hae had twa poor folk to do? There was yoursell gane that aught the things, and Maister Mordaunt was gane that had them in keeping, and the things were but damply put up, where they were rotting with moth and mould, and ——'

'And so this old thief sold them, and you bought them, I suppose, just to keep them from spoiling?' said Cleveland.

'Weel then,' said the merchant, 'I'm thinking, noble captain, that wad be just the gate of it.'

'Well then, hark ye, you impudent scoundrel,' said the

captain, 'I do not wish to dirty my fingers with you, or to make any disturbance in this place —'

'Good reason for that, captain — aha!' said the jagger, slyly.

'I will break your bones if you speak another word,' replied Cleveland. 'Take notice — I offer you fair terms: give me back the black leathern pocket-book with the lock upon it, and the purse with the doubloons, with some few of the clothes I want, and keep the rest in the devil's name!'

'Doubloons!!!' exclaimed the jagger, with an exaltation of voice intended to indicate the utmost extremity of surprise. 'What do I ken of doubloons? my dealing was for doubles, and not for doubloons. If there were doubloons in the kist, doubtless Swertha will have them in safe keeping for your honour; the damp wouldna harm the gold, ye ken.'

'Give me back my pocket-book and my goods, you rascally thief,' said Cleveland, 'or without a word more I will beat your brains out!'

The wily jagger, casting eye around him, saw that succour was near, in the shape of a party of officers, six in number; for several rencontres with the crew of the pirate had taught the magistrates of Kirkwall to strengthen their police parties when these strangers were in question.

'Ye had better keep the *thief* to suit yoursell, honoured captain,' said the jagger, emboldened by the approach of the civil power; 'for wha kens how a' these fine goods and bonny dyes were come by?'

This was uttered with such provoking slyness in look and tone, that Cleveland made no further delay, but, seizing upon the jagger by the collar, dragged him over his temporary counter, which was, with all the goods displayed thereon, over-set in the scuffle; and, holding him with one hand, inflicted on him with the other a severe beating with his cane. All this was done so suddenly and with such energy that Bryce Snailsfoot, though rather a stout man, was totally surprised by the vivacity of the attack, and made scarce any other effort at extricating himself than by roaring for assistance like a bull-calf. The 'loitering aid' having at length come up, the officers made an effort to seize on Cleveland, and by their united exertions succeeded in compelling him to quit hold of the pedlar in order to defend himself from their assault. This he did with infinite strength, resolution, and dexterity, being at the same time well seconded by his friend Jack Bunce, who had

seen with glee the drubbing sustained by the pedlar, and now combated tightly to save his companion from the consequences. But, as there had been for some time a growing feud between the townspeople and the crew of the rover, the former, provoked by the insolent deportment of the seamen, had resolved to stand by each other, and to aid the civil power upon such occasions of riot as should occur in future; and so many assistants came up to the rescue of the constables, that Cleveland, after fighting most manfully, was at length brought to the ground and made prisoner. His more fortunate companion had escaped by speed of foot, as soon as he saw that the day must needs be determined against them.

The proud heart of Cleveland, which, even in its perversion, had in its feelings something of original nobleness, was like to burst when he felt himself borne down in this unworthy brawl, dragged into the town as a prisoner, and hurried through the streets towards the council-house, where the magistrates of the burgh were then seated in council. The probability of imprisonment, with all its consequences, rushed also upon his mind, and he cursed a hundred times the folly which had not rather submitted to the pedlar's knavery than involved him in so perilous an embarrassment.

But, just as they approached the door of the council-house, which is situated in the middle of the little town, the face of matters was suddenly changed by a new and unexpected incident.

Bunce, who had designed, by his precipitate retreat, to serve as well his friend as himself, had hied him to the haven, where the boat the rover was then lying, and called the cockswain and boat crew to the assistance of Cleveland. They now appeared on the scene — fierce desperadoes, as became their calling, with features bronzed by the tropical sun under which they had pursued it. They rushed at once amongst the crowd, laying about them with their stretchers; and, forcing their way up to Cleveland, speedily delivered him from the hands of the officers, who were totally unprepared to resist an attack so furious and so sudden, and carried him off in triumph towards the quay, — two or three of their number facing about from time to time to keep back the crowd, whose efforts to recover the prisoner were the less violent that most of the seamen were armed with pistols and cutlasses, as well as with the less lethal weapons which alone they had as yet made use of.

They gained their boat in safety, and jumped into it, carry-

ing along with them Cleveland, to whom circumstances seemed to offer no other refuge, and pushed off for their vessel, singing in chorus to their oars an old ditty, of which the natives of Kirkwall could only hear the first stanza :

' Robin Rover
Said to his crew,
" Up with the black flag,
Down with the blue !
Fire on the main-top,
Fire on the bow,
Fire on the gun-deck,
Fire down below ! "

The wild chorus of their voices was heard long after the words ceased to be intelligent. And thus was the pirate Cleveland again thrown almost involuntarily amongst those desperate associates from whom he had so often resolved to detach himself.

CHAPTER XXXIII

Parental love, my friend, has power o'er wisdom,
And is the charm which, like the falconer's lure,
Can bring from heaven the highest soaring spirits.
So, when famed Prosper doff'd his magic robe,
It was Miranda pluck'd it from his shoulders.

Old Play.

OUR wandering narrative must now return to Mordaunt Mertoun. We left him in the perilous condition of one who has received a severe wound, and we now find him in the situation of a convalescent—pale, indeed, and feeble from the loss of much blood and the effects of a fever which had followed the injury, but so far fortunate, that the weapon, having glanced on the ribs, had only occasioned a great effusion of blood, without touching any vital part, and was now wellnigh healed; so efficacious were the vulnerary plants and salves with which it had been treated by the sage Norna of Fitful Head.

The matron and her patient now sat together in a dwelling in a remote island. He had been transported during his illness, and ere he had perfect consciousness, first to her singular habitation near Fitful Head and thence to her present abode, by one of the fishing-boats in the station of Burgh-Westra. For such was the command possessed by Norna over the superstitious character of her countrymen, that she never failed to find faithful agents to execute her commands, whatever these happened to be; and, as her orders were generally given under injunctions of the strictest secrecy, men reciprocally wondered at occurrences which had in fact been produced by their own agency and that of their neighbours, and in which, had they communicated freely with each other, no shadow of the marvellous would have remained.

Mordaunt was now seated by the fire, in an apartment indifferently well furnished, having a book in his hand, which he looked upon from time to time with signs of *ennui* and

impatience — feelings which at length so far overcame him that, flinging the volume on the table, he fixed his eyes on the fire, and assumed the attitude of one who is engaged in unpleasant meditation.

Norna, who sat opposite to him, and appeared busy in the composition of some drug or unguent, anxiously left her seat, and, approaching Mordaunt, felt his pulse, making at the same time the most affectionate inquiries whether he felt any sudden pain, and where it was seated. The manner in which Mordaunt replied to these earnest inquiries, although worded so as to express gratitude for her kindness, while he disclaimed any feeling of indisposition, did not seem to give satisfaction to the pythoness.

‘Ungrateful boy!’ she said, ‘for whom I have done so much; you whom I have rescued, by my power and skill, from the very gates of death — are you already so weary of me, that you cannot refrain from showing how desirous you are to spend at a distance from me the very first intelligent days of the life which I have restored you?’

‘You do me injustice, my kind preserver,’ replied Mordaunt: ‘I am not tired of your society; but I have duties which recall me to ordinary life.’

‘Duties!’ repeated Norna; ‘and what duties can or ought to interfere with the gratitude which you owe to me? Duties! Your thoughts are on the use of your gun, or on clambering among the rocks in quest of sea-fowl. For these exercises your strength doth not yet fit you; and yet these are the duties to which you are so anxious to return!’

‘Not so, my good and kind mistress,’ said Mordaunt. ‘To name one duty, out of many, which makes me seek to leave you, now that my strength permits, let me mention that of a son to his father.’

‘To your father!’ said Norna, with a laugh that had something in it almost frantic. ‘Oh! you know not how we can, in these islands, at once cancel such duties! And, for your father,’ she added, proceeding more calmly, ‘what has he done for you, to deserve the regard and duty you speak of? Is he not the same who, as you have long since told me, left you for so many years poorly nourished among strangers, without inquiring whether you were alive or dead, and only sending, from time to time, supplies in such fashion as men relieve the leprous wretch to whom they fling alms from a distance? And, in these later years, when he had made you the companion of

his misery, he has been by starts your pedagogue, by starts your tormentor, but never, Mordaunt — never your father.'

'Something of truth there is in what you say,' replied Mordaunt. 'My father is not fond; but he is, and has ever been, effectively kind. Men have not their affections in their power; and it is a child's duty to be grateful for the benefits which he receives, even when coldly bestowed. My father has conferred instruction on me, and I am convinced he loves me. He is unfortunate; and, even if he loved me not —'

'And he does *not* love you,' said Norna, hastily; 'he never loved anything, or any one, save himself. He is unfortunate, but well are his misfortunes deserved. O Mordaunt, you have one parent only — one parent, who loves you as the drops of the heart-blood!'

'I know I have but one parent,' replied Mordaunt: 'my mother has been long dead. But your words contradict each other.'

'They do not — they do not,' said Norna, in a paroxysm of the deepest feeling; 'you have but one parent. Your unhappy mother is not dead — I would to God that she were! — but she is not dead. Thy mother is the only parent that loves thee; and I — I, Mordaunt,' throwing herself on his neck, 'am that most unhappy, yet most happy, mother.'

She closed him in a strict and convulsive embrace; and tears, the first, perhaps, which she had shed for many years, burst in torrents as she sobbed on his neck. Astonished at what he heard, felt, and saw, moved by the excess of her agitation, yet disposed to ascribe this burst of passion to insanity, Mordaunt vainly endeavoured to tranquillise the mind of this extraordinary person.

'Ungrateful boy!' she said, 'who but a mother would have watched over thee as I have watched? From the instant I saw thy father, when he little thought by whom he was observed, a space now many years back, I knew him well; and, under his charge, I saw you, then a stripling; while nature, speaking loud in my bosom, assured me thou wert blood of my blood and bone of my bone. Think how often you have wondered to see me, when least expected, in your places of pastime and resort! Think how often my eye has watched you on the giddy precipices, and muttered those charms which subdue the evil demons, who show themselves to the climber on the giddiest point of his path, and force him to quit his hold! Did I not hang around thy neck, in pledge of thy safety, that chain of

gold, which an elfin king gave to the founder of our race? Would I have given that dear gift to any but the son of my bosom? Mordaunt, my power has done that for thee that a mere mortal mother would dread to think of. I have conjured the mermaid at midnight, that thy bark might be prosperous on the haaf! I have hushed the winds, and navies have flapped their empty sails against the mast in inactivity, that you might safely indulge your sport upon the crags!

Mordaunt, perceiving that she was growing yet wilder in her talk, endeavoured to frame an answer which should be at once indulgent, soothing, and calculated to allay the rising warmth of her imagination.

'Dear Norna,' he said, 'I have indeed many reasons to call you mother, who have bestowed so many benefits upon me; and from me you shall ever receive the affection and duty of a child. But the chain you mentioned, — it has vanished from my neck: I have not seen it since the ruffian stabbed me.'

'Alas! and can you think of it at this moment?' said Norna, in a sorrowful accent. 'But be it so; and know, it was I took it from thy neck, and tied it around the neck of her who is dearest to you; in token that the union betwixt you, which has been the only earthly wish which I have had the power to form, shall yet — even yet, be accomplished — ay, although hell should open to forbid the banns!'

'Alas!' said Mordaunt, with a sigh, 'you remember not the difference betwixt our situation — her father is wealthy, and of ancient birth.'

'Not more wealthy than will be the heir of Norna of Fitful Head,' answered the pythoness; 'not of better or more ancient blood than that which flows in thy veins, derived from thy mother, the descendant of the same jarls and sea-kings from whom Magnus boasts his origin. Or dost thou think, like the pedant and fanatic strangers who have come amongst us, that thy blood is dishonoured because my union with thy father did not receive the sanction of a priest? Know, that we were wedded after the ancient manner of the Norse: our hands were clasped within the circle of Odin,¹ with such deep vows of eternal fidelity as even the laws of these usurping Scots would have sanctioned as equivalent to a blessing before the altar. To the offspring of such a union, Magnus has nought to object. It was weak, it was criminal, on my part, but it conveyed no infamy to the birth of my son.'

¹ See an explanation of this promise, note, p. 462.

The composed and collected manner in which Norna argued these points began to impose upon Mordaunt an incipient belief in the truth of what she said ; and indeed, she added so many circumstances, satisfactorily and rationally connected with each other, as seemed to confute the notion that her story was altogether the delusion of that insanity which sometimes showed itself in her speech and actions. A thousand confused ideas rushed upon him, when he supposed it possible that the unhappy person before him might actually have a right to claim from him the respect and affection due to a parent from a son. He could only surmount them by turning his mind to a different, and scarce less interesting, topic, resolving within himself to take time for farther inquiry and mature consideration ere he either rejected or admitted the claim which Norna preferred upon his affection and duty. His benefactress, at least, she undoubtedly was, and he could not err in paying her, as such, the respect and attention due from a son to a mother ; and so far, therefore, he might gratify Norna without otherwise standing committed.

‘And do you then really think, my mother — since so you bid me term you,’ said Mordaunt, ‘that the proud Magnus Troil may, by any inducement, be prevailed upon to relinquish the angry feelings which he has of late adopted towards me, and to permit my addresses to his daughter Brenda?’

‘Brenda!’ repeated Norna — ‘who talks of Brenda? it is of Minna that I spoke to you.’

‘But it was of Brenda that I thought,’ replied Mordaunt, ‘of her that I now think, and of her alone that I will ever think.’

‘Impossible, my son!’ replied Norna. ‘You cannot be so dull of heart, so poor of spirit, as to prefer the idle mirth and housewife simplicity of the younger sister to the deep feeling and high mind of the noble-spirited Minna? Who would stoop to gather the lowly violet that might have the rose for stretching out his hand?’

‘Some think the lowliest flowers are the sweetest,’ replied Mordaunt, ‘and in that faith will I live and die.’

‘You dare not tell me so!’ answered Norna, fiercely ; then, instantly changing her tone, and taking his hand in the most affectionate manner, she proceeded : ‘You must not — you will not tell me so, my dear son : you will not break a mother’s heart in the very first hour in which she has embraced her child! Nay, do not answer, but hear me. You must wed Minna ; I have bound around her neck a fatal amulet, on which

the happiness of both depends. The labours of my life have for years had this direction. Thus it must be, and not otherwise : Minna must be the bride of my son !'

'But is not Brenda equally near, equally dear to you?' replied Mordaunt.

'As near in blood,' said Norna, 'but not so dear — no, not half so dear, in affection. Minna's mild, yet high and contemplative, spirit renders her a companion meet for one whose ways, like mine, are beyond the ordinary paths of this world. Brenda is a thing of common and ordinary life, an idle laugh and scoffer, who would level art with ignorance, and reduce power to weakness, by disbelieving and turning into ridicule whatever is beyond the grasp of her shallow intellect.'

'She is, indeed,' answered Mordaunt, 'neither superstitious nor enthusiastic, and I love her the better for it. Remember also, my mother, that she returns my affection, and that Minna, if she loves any one, loves the stranger Cleveland.'

'She does not — she dares not,' answered Norna, 'nor dares he pursue her farther. I told him, when first he came to Burgh-Westra, that I destined her for you.'

'And to that rash annunciation,' said Mordaunt, 'I owe this man's persevering enmity, my wound, and wellnigh the loss of my life. See, my mother, to what point your intrigues have already conducted us, and, in Heaven's name, prosecute them no farther !'

It seemed as if this reproach struck Norna with the force at once and vivacity of lightning ; for she struck her forehead with her hand, and seemed about to drop from her seat. Mordaunt, greatly shocked, hastened to catch her in his arms, and, though scarce knowing what to say, attempted to utter some incoherent expressions.

'Spare me, Heaven — spare me !' were the first words which she muttered ; 'do not let my crime be avenged by his means ! Yes, young man,' she said, after a pause, 'you have dared to tell what I dared not tell myself. You have pressed that upon me which, if it be truth, I cannot believe and yet continue to live !'

Mordaunt in vain endeavoured to interrupt her with protestations of his ignorance how he had offended or grieved her, and of his extreme regret that he had unintentionally done either. She proceeded, while her voice trembled wildly, with vehemence.

'Yes ! you have touched on that dark suspicion which

poisons the consciousness of my power — the sole boon which was given me in exchange for innocence and for peace of mind ! Your voice joins that of the demon which, even while the elements confess me their mistress, whispers to me, "Norna, this is but delusion : your power rests but in the idle belief of the ignorant, supported by a thousand petty artifices of your own." This is what Brenda says — this is what you would say ; and false, scandalously false, as it is, there are rebellious thoughts in this wild brain of mine (touching her forehead with her finger as she spoke), that, like an insurrection in an invaded country, arise to take part against their distressed sovereign. Spare me, my son !' she continued, in a voice of supplication — spare me ! the sovereignty of which your words would deprive me is no enviable exaltation. Few would covet to rule over gibbering ghosts, and howling winds, and raging currents. My throne is a cloud, my sceptre a meteor, my realm is only peopled with fantasies ; but I must either cease to be, or continue to be the mightiest as well as the most miserable of beings !'¹

'Do not speak thus mournfully, my dear and unhappy benefactress,' said Mordaunt, much affected ; 'I will think of your power whatever you would have me believe. But, for your own sake, view the matter otherwise. Turn your thoughts from such agitating and mystical studies — from such wild subjects of contemplation, into another and a better channel. Life will again have charms, and religion will have comforts, for you.'

She listened to him with some composure, as if she weighed his counsel, and desired to be guided by it ; but, as he ended, she shook her head and exclaimed —

'It cannot be. I must remain the dreaded — the mystical — the Reim-kennar — the controller of the elements, or I must be no more ! I have no alternative, no middle station. My post must be high on yon lofty headland, where never stood human foot save mine, or I must sleep at the bottom of the unfathomable ocean, its white billows booming over my senseless corpse. The parricide shall never also be denounced as the impostor !'

'The parricide !' echoed Mordaunt, stepping back in horror.

'Yes, my son !' answered Norna, with a stern composure even more frightful than her former impetuosity, 'within these fatal walls my father met his death by my means. In yonder chamber was he found a livid and lifeless corpse. Beware of filial disobedience, for such are its fruits !'

¹ See Character of Norna. Note 42.

So saying, she arose and left the apartment, where Mordaunt remained alone to meditate at leisure upon the extraordinary communication which he had received. He himself had been taught by his father a disbelief in the ordinary superstitions of Zetland; and he now saw that Norna, however ingenious in duping others, could not altogether impose on herself. This was a strong circumstance in favour of her sanity of intellect; but, on the other hand, her imputing to herself the guilt of parricide seemed so wild and improbable as, in Mordaunt's opinion, to throw much doubt upon her other assertions.

He had leisure enough to make up his mind on these particulars, for no one approached the solitary dwelling, of which Norna, her dwarf, and he himself were the sole inhabitants. The Hoy Island in which it stood is rude, bold, and lofty, consisting entirely of three hills, or rather one huge mountain divided into three summits, with the chasms, rents, and valleys which descend from its summit to the sea, while its crest, rising to great height, and shivered into rocks which seem almost inaccessible, intercepts the mists as they drive from the Atlantic, and, often obscured from the human eye, forms the dark and unmolested retreat of hawks, eagles, and other birds of prey.¹

The soil of the island is wet, mossy, cold, and unproductive, presenting a sterile and desolate appearance, excepting where the sides of small rivulets, or mountain ravines, are fringed with dwarf bushes of birch, hazel, and wild currant, some of them so tall as to be denominated trees in that bleak and bare country.

But the view of the sea-beach, which was Mordaunt's favourite walk, when his convalescent state began to permit him to take exercise, had charms which compensated the wild appearance of the interior. A broad and beautiful sound, or strait, divides this lonely and mountainous island from Pomona, and in the centre of that sound lies, like a tablet composed of emerald, the beautiful and verdant little island of Graemsay. On the distant Mainland is seen the town or village of Stromness, the excellence of whose haven is generally evinced by a considerable number of shipping in the roadstead, and, from the bay growing narrower and lessening as it recedes, runs inland into Pomona, where its tide fills the fine sheet of water called the Loch of Stennis.

On this beach Mordaunt was wont to wander for hours, with an eye not insensible to the beauties of the view, though his thoughts were agitated with the most embarrassing meditations on his own situation. He was resolved to leave the island as

¹ See Note 43.

soon as the establishment of his health should permit him to travel; yet gratitude to Norna, of whom he was at least the adopted, if not the real, son, would not allow him to depart without her permission, even if he could obtain means of conveyance, of which he saw little possibility. It was only by importunity that he extorted from his hostess a promise that, if he would consent to regulate his motions according to her directions, she would herself convey him to the capital of the Orkney Islands, when the approaching fair of St. Olla should take place there.

CHAPTER XXXIV

Hark to the insult loud, the bitter sneer,
The fierce threat answering to the brutal jeer ;
Oaths fly like pistol-shots, and vengeful words
Clash with each other like conflicting swords.
The robber's quarrel by such sounds is shown,
And true men have some chance to gain their own.

Captivity, a Poem.

WHEN Cleveland, borne off in triumph from his assailants in Kirkwall, found himself once more on board the pirate vessel, his arrival was hailed with hearty cheers by a considerable part of the crew, who rushed to shake hands with him and offer their congratulations on his return ; for the situation of a buccannier captain raised him very little above the level of the lowest of his crew, who, in all social intercourse, claimed the privilege of being his equal.

When his faction, for so these clamorous friends might be termed, had expressed their own greetings, they hurried Cleveland forward to the stern, where Goffe, their present commander, was seated on a gun, listening in a sullen and discontented manner to the shout which announced Cleveland's welcome. He was a man betwixt forty and fifty, rather under the middle size, but so very strongly made that his crew used to compare him to a sixty-four cut down. Black-haired, bull-necked, and beetle-browed, his clumsy strength and ferocious countenance contrasted strongly with the manly figure and open countenance of Cleveland, in which even the practice of his atrocious profession had not been able to eradicate a natural grace of motion and generosity of expression. The two piratical captains looked upon each other for some time in silence, while the partizans of each gathered around him. The elder part of the crew were the principal adherents of Goffe, while the young fellows, amongst whom Jack Bunce was a principal leader and agitator, were in general attached to Cleveland.

At length Goffe broke silence — 'You are welcome aboard,

Captain Cleveland. Smash my taffrail! I suppose you think yourself commodore yet! but that was over, by G—, when you lost your ship, and be d—d!

And here, once for all, we may take notice that it was the gracious custom of this commander to mix his words and oaths in nearly equal proportions, which he was wont to call *shotting* his discourse. As we delight not, however, in the discharge of such artillery, we shall only indicate by a space like this — the places in which these expletives occurred; and thus, if the reader will pardon a very poor pun, we will reduce Captain Goffe's volley of sharp-shot into an explosion of blank cartridges. To his insinuations that he was come on board to assume the chief command, Cleveland replied, that he neither desired nor would accept any such promotion, but would only ask Captain Goffe for a cast of the boat to put him ashore in one of the other islands, as he had no wish either to command Goffe or to remain in a vessel under his orders.

'And why not under my orders, brother?' demanded Goffe, very austere; '——— are you too good a man, —— with your cheese-toaster and your jib there, —— to serve under my orders, and be d—d to you, where there are so many gentlemen that are elder and better seamen than yourself?'

'I wonder which of these capital seamen it was,' said Cleveland, coolly, 'that laid the ship under the fire of yon six-gun battery, that could blow her out of the water, if they had a mind, before you could either cut or slip? Elder and better sailors than I may like to serve under such a lubber, but I beg to be excused for my own share, captain — that's all I have got to tell you.'

'By G—, I think you are both mad!' said Hawkins, the boatswain: 'a meeting with sword and pistol may be devilish good fun in its way when no better is to be had; but who the devil that had common sense amongst a set of gentlemen in our condition would fall a-quarrelling with each other, to let these duck-winged, web-footed islanders have a chance of knocking us all upon the head?'

'Well said, old Hawkins!' said Derrick, the quarter-master, who was an officer of very considerable importance among these rovers; 'I say, if the two captains won't agree to live together quietly, and club both heart and head to defend the vessel, why, d—n me, depose them both, say I, and choose another in their stead!'

'Meaning yourself, I suppose, Master Quarter-Master!' said

Jack Bunce; 'but that cock won't fight. He that is to command gentlemen should be a gentleman himself, I think; and I give my vote for Captain Cleveland, as spirited and as gentleman-like a man as ever dashed the world aside and bid it pass!'

'What! *you* call yourself a gentleman, I warrant!' retorted Derrick; 'why, — your eyes! a tailor would make a better out of the worst suit of rags in your strolling wardrobe! It is a shame for men of spirit to have such a Jack-a-dandy scarecrow on board!'

Jack Bunce was so incensed at these base comparisons that, without more ado, he laid his hand on his sword. The carpenter, however, and boatswain interfered, the former brandishing his broad axe, and swearing he would put the skull of the first who should strike a blow past clouting, and the latter reminding them that, by their articles, all quarrelling, striking, or more especially fighting, on board was strictly prohibited; and that, if any gentleman had a quarrel to settle, they were to go ashore and decide it with cutlass and pistol in presence of two of their messmates.

'I have no quarrel with any one, — — —!' said Goffe, sullenly. 'Captain Cleveland has wandered about among the islands here, amusing himself, — — —! and we have wasted our time and property in waiting for him, when we might have been adding twenty or thirty thousand dollars to the stock-purse. However, if it pleases the rest of the gentlemen-adventurers, — — —! why, I shall not grumble about it.'

'I propose,' said the boatswain, 'that there should be a general council called in the great cabin, according to our articles, that we may consider what course we are to hold in this matter.'

A general assent followed the boatswain's proposal; for every one found his own account in these general councils, in which each of the rovers had a free vote. By far the greater part of the crew only valued this franchise as it allowed them, upon such solemn occasions, an unlimited quantity of liquor — a right which they failed not to exercise to the uttermost — by way of aiding their deliberations. But a few amongst the adventurers, who united some degree of judgment with the daring and profligate character of their profession, were wont, at such periods, to limit themselves within the bounds of comparative sobriety, and by these, under the apparent form of a vote of the general council, all things of moment relating to the voyage and undertakings of the pirates were in fact determined. The rest of the

crew, when they recovered from their intoxication, were easily persuaded that the resolution adopted had been the legitimate effort of the combined wisdom of the whole senate.

Upon the present occasion the debauch had proceeded until the greater part of the crew were, as usual, displaying inebriation in all its most brutal and disgraceful shapes: swearing empty and unmeaning oaths; venting the most horrid imprecations in the mere gaiety of their heart; singing songs, the ribaldry of which was only equalled by their profaneness; and, from the middle of this earthly hell, the two captains, together with one or two of their principal adherents, as also the carpenter and boatswain, who always took a lead on such occasions, had drawn together into a pandemonium, or privy council, of their own, to consider what was to be done; for, as the boatswain metaphorically observed, they were in a narrow channel, and behoved to keep sounding the tide-way.

When they began their consultations, the friends of Goffe remarked, to their great displeasure, that he had not observed the wholesome rule to which we have just alluded; but that, in endeavouring to drown his mortification at the sudden appearance of Cleveland, and the reception he met with from the crew, the elder captain had not been able to do so without overflowing his reason at the same time. His natural sullen taciturnity had prevented this from being observed until the council began its deliberations, when it proved impossible to hide it.

The first person who spoke was Cleveland, who said that, so far from wishing the command of the vessel, he desired no favour at any one's hand, except to land him upon some island or holm at a distance from Kirkwall, and leave him to shift for himself.

The boatswain remonstrated strongly against this resolution. 'The lads,' he said, 'all knew Cleveland, and could trust his seamanship, as well as his courage; besides, he never let the grog get quite uppermost, and was always in proper trim, either to sail the ship or to fight the ship, whereby she was never without some one to keep her course when he was on board. And as for the noble Captain Goffe,' continued the mediator, 'he is as stout a heart as ever broke biscuit, and that I will uphold him; but then, when he has his grog aboard—I speak to his face—he is so d—d funny with his cranks and his jests, that there is no living with him. You all remember how nigh he had run the ship on that cursed Horse of Copiusha, as they

call it, just by way of frolic; and then you know how he fired off his pistol under the table when we were at the great council and shot Jack Jenkins in the knee, and cost the poor devil his leg with his pleasantry.¹

'Jack Jenkins was not a chip the worse,' said the carpenter. 'I took the leg off with my saw as well as any loblolly-boy in the land could have done, heated my broad axe, and seared the stump—ay, by——! and made a jury-leg that he shambles about with as well as ever he did; for Jack could never cut a feather.'

'You are a clever fellow, carpenter,' replied the boatswain—'a d—d clever fellow! but I had rather you tried your saw and red-hot axe upon the ship's knee-timbers than on mine, sink me! But that here is not the case. The question is, if we shall part with Captain Cleveland here, who is a man of thought and action, whereby it is my belief it would be heaving the pilot overboard when the gale is blowing on a lee-shore. And, I must say, it is not the part of a true heart to leave his mates, who have been here waiting for him till they have missed stays. Our water is wellnigh out, and we have junketed till provisions are low with us. We cannot sail without provisions; we cannot get provisions without the good-will of the Kirkwall folks. If we remain here longer, the "Halcyon" frigate will be down upon us—she was seen off Peterhead two days since—and we shall hang up at the yard-arm to be sun-dried. Now, Captain Cleveland will get us out—'be hobble, if any can. He can play the gentleman with these Kirkwall folks, and knows how to deal with them on fair terms, and foul too, if there be occasion for it.'

'And so you would turn honest Captain Goffe a-grazing, would ye?' said an old weather-beaten pirate, who had but one eye; 'what though he has his humours, and made my eye douse the glim in his fancies and frolics, he is as honest a man as ever walked a quarter-deck, for all that; and d—n me but I stand by him so long as t'other lantern is lit!'

'Why, you would not hear me out,' said Hawkins: 'a man might as well talk to so many negers! I tell you, I propose that Cleveland shall only be captain from one *post meridiem* to five A. M., during which time Goffe is always drunk.'

The captain of whom he last spoke gave sufficient proof of the truth of his words by uttering an inarticulate growl, and attempting to present a pistol at the mediator Hawkins.

¹ See Avery's Pleasantry. Note 44.

'Why, look ye now!' said Derrick, 'there is all the sense he has, to get drunk on council-day, like one of these poor silly fellows!'

'Ay,' said Bunce, 'drunk as Davy's sow, in the face of the field, the fray, and the senate!'

'But, nevertheless,' continued Derrick, 'it will never do to have two captains in the same day. I think week about might suit better; and let Cleveland take the first turn.'

'There are as good here as any of them,' said Hawkins; 'howsomdever, I object nothing to Captain Cleveland, and I think he may help us into deep water as well as another.'

'Ay,' exclaimed Bunce, 'and a better figure he will make at bringing these Kirkwallers to order than his sober predecessor! So, Captain Cleveland for ever!'

'Stop, gentlemen,' said Cleveland, who had hitherto been silent; 'I hope you will not choose me captain without my own consent?'

'Ay, by the blue vault of heaven will we,' said Bunce, 'if it be *pro bono publico*!'

'But hear me, at least,' said Cleveland. 'I do consent to take command of the vessel, since you wish it, and because I see you will ill get out of the scrape without me.'

'Why, then, I say, Cleveland for ever, again!' shouted Bunce.

'Be quiet, prithee, dear Bunce! -- honest Altamont!' said Cleveland. 'I undertake the business on this condition -- that, when I have got the ship cleared for her voyage, with provisions and so forth, you will be content to restore Captain Goffe, to the command, as I said before, and put me ashore somewhere, to shift for myself. You will then be sure it is impossible I can betray you, since I will remain with you to the last moment.'

'Ay, and after the last moment, too, by the blue vault! or I mistake the matter,' muttered Bunce to himself.

The matter was now put to the vote; and so confident were the crew in Cleveland's superior address and management, that the temporary deposition of Goffe found little resistance even among his own partizans, who reasonably enough observed, 'He might at least have kept sober to look after his own business. Even let him put it to rights again himself next morning, if he will.'

But when the next morning came, the drunken part of the crew, being informed of the issue of the deliberations of the council, to which they were virtually held to have assented, showed such a superior sense of Cleveland's merits, that Goffe,

sulky and malcontent as he was, judged it wisest for the present to suppress his feelings of resentment, until a safer opportunity for suffering them to explode, and to submit to the degradation which so frequently took place among a piratical crew.

Cleveland, on his part, resolved to take upon him, with spirit and without loss of time, the task of extricating his ship's company from their perilous situation. For this purpose, he ordered the boat, with the purpose of going ashore in person, carrying with him twelve of the stoutest and best men of the ship's company, all very handsomely appointed (for the success of their nefarious profession had enabled the pirates to assume nearly as gay dresses as their officers), and above all, each man being sufficiently armed with cutlass and pistols, and several having pole-axes and poniards.

Cleveland himself was gallantly attired in a blue coat, lined with crimson silk, and laced with gold very richly, crimson damask waistcoat and breeches, a velvet cap, richly embroidered, with a white feather, white silk stockings, and red-heeled shoes, which were the extremity of finery among the gallants of the day. He had a gold chain several times folded round his neck, which sustained a whistle of the same metal, the ensign of his authority. Above all, he wore a decoration peculiar to those daring depredators, who, besides one, or perhaps two, brace of pistols at their belt, had usually two additional brace, of the finest mounting and workmanship, suspended over their shoulders in a sort of sling or scarf of crimson ribbon. The hilt and mounting of the captain's sword corresponded in value to the rest of his appointments, and his natural good mien was so well adapted to the whole equipment that, when he appeared on deck, he was received with a general shout by the crew, who, as in other popular societies, judged a great deal by the eye.

Cleveland took with him in the boat, amongst others, his predecessor in office, Goffe, who was also very richly dressed, but who, not having the advantage of such an exterior as Cleveland's, looked like a boorish clown in the dress of a courtier, or rather like a vulgar-faced foot-pad decked in the spoils of some one whom he has murdered, and whose claim to the property of his garments is rendered doubtful in the eyes of all who look upon him by the mixture of awkwardness, remorse, cruelty, and insolence which clouds his countenance. Cleveland probably chose to take Goffe ashore with him to prevent his having any opportunity, during his absence, to debauch the crew from their allegiance. In this guise they left the ship,

and, singing to their oars, while the water foamed higher at the chorus, soon reached the quay of Kirkwall.

The command of the vessel was in the meantime entrusted to Bunce, upon whose allegiance Cleveland knew that he might perfectly depend, and, in a private conversation with him of some length, he gave him directions how to act in such emergencies as might occur.

These arrangements being made, and Bunce having been repeatedly charged to stand upon his guard alike against the adherents of Goffe and any attempt from the shore, the boat put off. As she approached the harbour, Cleveland displayed a white flag, and could observe that their appearance seemed to occasion a good deal of bustle and alarm. People were seen running to and fro, and some of them appeared to be getting under arms. The battery was manned hastily, and the English colours displayed. These were alarming symptoms, the rather that Cleveland knew that, though there were no artillerymen in Kirkwall, yet there were many sailors perfectly competent to the management of great guns, and willing enough to undertake such service in case of need.

Noting these hostile preparations with a heedful eye, but suffering nothing like doubt or anxiety to appear on his countenance, Cleveland ran the boat right for the quay, on which several people, armed with muskets, rifles, and fowling-pieces, and others with half-pikes and whaling-knives, were now assembled, as if to oppose his landing. Apparently, however, they had not positively determined what measures they were to pursue; for, when the boat reached the quay, those immediately opposite bore back, and suffered Cleveland and his party to leap ashore without hindrance. They immediately drew up on the quay, except two, who, as their captain had commanded, remained in the boat, which they put off to a little distance — a manœuvre which, while it placed the boat (the only one belonging to the sloop) out of danger of being seized, indicated a sort of careless confidence in Cleveland and his party, which was calculated to intimidate their opponents.

The Kirkwallers, however, showed the old Northern blood, put a manly face upon the matter, and stood upon the quay, with their arms shouldered, directly opposite to the rovers, and blocking up against them the street which leads to the town.

Cleveland was the first who spoke, as the parties stood thus looking upon each other. 'How is this, gentlemen burghers?' he said; 'are you Orkney folks turned Highlandmen, that you

are all under arms so early this morning ; or have you manned the quay to give me the honour of a salute, upon taking the command of my ship ?'

The burghers looked on each other, and one of them replied to Cleveland — 'We do not know who you are ; it was that other man,' pointing to Goffe, 'who used to come ashore as captain.'

'That other gentleman is my mate, and commands in my absence,' said Cleveland ; 'but what is that to the purpose ?' 'I wish to speak with your lord mayor, or whatever you call him.'

'The provost is sitting in council with the magistrates,' answered the spokesman.

'So much the better,' replied Cleveland. 'Where do their worships meet ?'

'In the council-house,' answered the other.

'Then make way for us, gentlemen, if you please, for my people and I are going there.'

There was a whisper among the townspeople ; but several were unresolved upon engaging in a desperate, and perhaps an unnecessary, conflict with desperate men ; and the more determined citizens formed the hasty reflection that the strangers might be more easily mastered in the house, or perhaps in the narrow streets which they had to traverse, than when they stood drawn up and prepared for battle upon the quay. They suffered them, therefore, to proceed unmolested ; and Cleveland, moving very slowly, keeping his people close together, suffering no one to press upon the flanks of his little detachment, and making four men, who constituted his rear-guard, turn round and face to the rear from time to time, rendered it, by his caution, a very dangerous task to make any attempt upon them.

In this manner they ascended the narrow street, and reached the council-house, where the magistrates were actually sitting, as the citizen had informed Cleveland. Here the inhabitants began to press forward, with the purpose of mingling with the pirates, and availing themselves of the crowd in the narrow entrance to secure as many as they could, without allowing them room for the free use of their weapons. But this also had Cleveland foreseen, and, ere entering the council-room, he caused the entrance to be cleared and secured, commanding four of his men to face down the street, and as many to confront the crowd who were thrusting each other from above. The burghers recoiled back from the ferocious, swarthy, and sunburnt countenances, as well as the levelled arms, of these desperadoes, and

Cleveland, with the rest of his party, entered the council-room, where the magistrates were sitting in council, with very little attendance. These gentlemen were thus separated effectually from the citizens, who looked to them for orders, and were perhaps more completely at the mercy of Cleveland than he, with his little handful of men, could be said to be at that of the multitude by whom they were surrounded.

The magistrates seemed sensible of their danger; for they looked upon each other in some confusion, when Cleveland thus addressed them:

'Good morrow, gentlemen; I hope there is no unkindness betwixt us. I am come to talk with you about getting supplies for my ship yonder in the roadstead; we cannot sail without them.'

'Yourship, sir!' said the provost, who was a man of sense and spirit; 'how do we know that you are her captain?'

'Look at me,' said Cleveland, 'and you will, I think, scarce ask the question again.'

The magistrate looked at him, and accordingly did not think proper to pursue that part of the inquiry, but proceeded to say — 'And if you are her captain, whence comes she, and where is she bound for? You look too much like a man-of-war's-man to be master of a trader, and we know that you do not belong to the British navy.'

'There are more men-of-war on the sea than sail under the British flag,' replied Cleveland; 'but say that I were commander of a free-trader here, willing to exchange tobacco, brandy, gin, and such-like for cured fish and hides, why, I do not think I deserve so very bad usage from the merchants of Kirkwall as to deny me provisions for my money?'

'Look you, captain,' said the town-clerk, 'it is not that we are so very strait-laced neither; for, when gentlemen of your cloth come this way, it is as weel, as I tauld the provost, just to do as the collier did when he met the devil; and that is, to have naething to say to them, if they have naething to say to us; and there is the gentleman,' pointing to Goffe, 'that was captain before you, and may be captain after you — ('The cuckold speaks truth in that,' muttered Goffe) — he knows well how handsomely we entertained him, till he and his men took upon them to run through the town like hellicat devils. I see one of them there! that was the very fellow that stopped my servant-wench on the street, as she carried the lantern home before me, and insulted her before my face!'

'If it please your noble mayorship's honour and glory,' said Derrick, the fellow at whom the town-clerk pointed, 'it was not I that brought to the bit of a tender that carried the lantern in the poop : it was quite a different sort of a person.'

'Who was it, then, sir?' said the provost.

'Why, please your majesty's worship,' said Derrick, making several sea bows, and describing as nearly as he could the exterior of the worthy magistrate himself, 'he was an elderly gentleman, Dutch-built, round in the stern, with a white wig and a red nose — very like your majesty, I think'; then, turning to a comrade, he added, 'Jack, don't you think the fellow that wanted to kiss the pretty girl with the lantern t'other night was very like his worship?'

'By G—, Tom Derrick,' answered the party appealed to, 'I believe it is the very man!'

'This is insolence which we can make you repent of, gentlemen!' said the magistrate, justly irritated at their effrontery: 'you have behaved in this town as if you were in an Indian village at Madagascar. You yourself, captain, if captain you be, were at the head of another riot no longer since than yesterday. We will give you no provisions till we know better whom we are supplying. And do not think to bully us; when I shake this handkerchief out at the window which is at my elbow, your ship goes to the bottom. Remember she lies under the guns of our battery.'

'And how many of these guns are honeycombed, Mr. Mayor?' said Cleveland. He put the question by chance; but instantly perceived, from a sort of confusion which the provost in vain endeavoured to hide, that the artillery of Kirkwall was not in the best order. 'Come — come, Mr. Mayor,' he said, 'bullying will go down with us as little as with you. Your guns yonder will do more harm to the poor old sailors who are to work them than to our sloop; and if we bring a broadside to bear on the town, why, your wives' crockery will be in some danger. And then to talk to us of seamen being a little frolicsome ashore, why, when are they otherwise? You have the Greenland whalers playing the devil among you every now and then; and the very Dutchmen cut capers in the streets of Kirkwall, like porpoises before a gale of wind. I am told you are a man of sense, and I am sure you and I could settle this matter in the course of a five minutes' palaver.'

'Well, sir,' said the provost, 'I will hear what you have to say, if you will walk this way.'

Cleveland accordingly followed him into a small interior apartment, and, when there, addressed the provost thus: 'I will lay aside my pistols, sir, if you are afraid of them.'

'D—n your pistols!' answered the provost; 'I have served the king, and fear the smell of powder as little as you do!'

'So much the better,' said Cleveland, 'for you will hear me the more coolly. Now, sir, let us be what perhaps you suspect us, or let us be anything else, what, in the name of Heaven, can you get by keeping us here but blows and bloodshed? for which, believe me, we are much better provided than you can pretend to be. The point is a plain one: you are desirous to be rid of us, we are desirous to be gone. Let us have the means of departure, and we leave you instantly.'

'Look ye, captain,' said the provost, 'I thirst for no man's blood. You are a pretty fellow, as there were many among the buccaniers in my time; but there is no harm in wishing you a better trade. You should have the stores and welcome, for your money, so you would make these seas clear of you. But then, here lies the rub. The "Haleyon" frigate is expected here in these parts immediately; when she hears of you she will be at you; for there is nothing the white lapelle loves better than a rover: you are se'lom without a cargo of dollars. Well, he comes down, gets you under his stern —'

'Blows us into the air, if you please,' said Cleveland.

'Nay, that must be as *you* please, captain,' said the provost; 'but then, what is to come of the good town of Kirkwall, that has been packing and peeling with the king's enemies? The burgh will be laid under a round fine, and it may be that the provost may not come off so easily.'

'Well, then,' said Cleveland, 'I see where your pinch lies. Now, suppose that I run round this island of yours, and get into the roadstead at Stromness? We could get what we want put on board there, without Kirkwall or the provost seeming to have any hand in it; or, if it should be ever questioned, your want of force and our superior strength will make a sufficient apology.'

'That may be,' said the provost; 'but, if I suffer you to leave your present station and go elsewhere, I must have some security that you will not do harm to the country.'

'And we,' said Cleveland, 'must have some security, on our side, that you will not detain us, by dribbling out our time, till the "Haleyon" is on the coast. Now, I am myself perfectly willing to continue on shore as a hostage, on the one side, pro-

vided you will give me your word not to betray me, and send some magistrate, or person of consequence, aboard the sloop, where his safety will be a guarantee for mine.'

The provost shook his head, and intimated it would be difficult to find a person willing to place himself as hostage in such a perilous condition; but said he would propose the arrangement to such of the council as were fit to be trusted with a matter of such weight.

CHAPTER XXXV

I left my poor plough to go ploughing the deep !

DIBDIN.

WHEN the provost and Cleveland had returned into the public council-room, the former retired a second time with such of his brethren as he thought proper to advise with ; and, while they were engaged in discussing Cleveland's proposal, refreshments were offered to him and his people. These the captain permitted his people to partake of, but with the greatest precaution against surprisal, one party relieving the guard whilst the others were at their food.

He himself, in the meanwhile, walked up and down the apartment, and conversed upon indifferent subjects with those present, like a person quite at his ease.

Amongst these individuals he saw, somewhat to his surprise, Triptolemus Yellowley, who, chancing to be at Kirkwall, had been summoned by the magistrates, as representative, in a certain degree, of the Lord Chamberlain, to attend council on this occasion. Cleveland immediately renewed the acquaintance which he had formed with the agriculturist at Burgh-Westra, and asked him his present business in Orkney.

'Just to look after some of my little plans, Captain Cleveland. I am weary of fighting with wild beasts at Ephesus yonder, and I just cam ower to see how my orchard was thriving, whilk I had planted four or five miles from Kirkwall, it may be a year bygane, and how the bees were thriving, whereof I had imported nine skeps, for the improvement of the country, and for the turning of the heather-bloom into wax and honey.'

'And they thrive, I hope?' said Cleveland, who, however little interested in the matter, sustained the conversation, as if to break the chilly and embarrassed silence which hung upon the company assembled.

'Thrive!' replied Triptolemus; 'they thrive like everything else in this country, and that is the backward way.'

'Want of care, I suppose?' said Cleveland.

'The contrary, sir — quite and clean the contrary,' replied the factor; 'they died of ower muckle care, like Lucky Christie's chickens. I asked to see the skeps, and cunning and joyful did the fallow look who was to have taken care of them. "Had there been ony body in charge but mysell," he said, "ye might have seen the skeps, or whatever you ca' them; but there wad hae been as mony solan-geese as flees in them, if it hadna been for my four quarters; for I watched them so closely, that I saw them a' creeping out at the little holes one sunny morning, and if I had not stopped the leak on the instant with a bit of clay, the deil a bee, or flee, or whatever they are, would have been left in the skeps, as ye ca' them!" In a word, sir, he had clagged up the hives, as if the puir things had had the pestilence, and my bees were as dead as if they had been smeaked; and so ends my hope *generandi gloria mellis*, as Virgilius hath it.'

'There is an end of your mead, then,' replied Cleveland; 'but what is your chance of cider? How does the orchard thrive?'

'O captain! this same Solomon of the Orcadian Ophir — I am sure no man need to send thither to fetch either talents of gold or talents of sense! — I say, this wise man had watered the young apple-trees, in his great tenderness, with hot water, and they are perished, root and branch! But what avails grieving? And I wish you would tell me, instead, what is all the din that these good folks are making about pirates? and what for are all these ill-looking men, that are armed like so mony Highlandmen, assembled in the judgment-chamber? for I am just come from the other side of the island, and I have heard nothing distinct about it. And, now I look at you yourself, captain, I think you have mair of these foolish pistolets about you than should suffice an honest man in quiet times?'

'And so I think, too,' said the pacific triton, old Haagen, who had been an unwilling follower of the daring Montrose; 'if you had been in the Glen of Edderachyllis, when we were sae sair worried by Sir John Worry —'

'You have forgot the whole matter, neighbour Haagen,' said the factor: 'Sir John Urry was on your side, and was ta'en with Montrose; by the same token, he lost his head.'

'Did he?' said the triton. 'I believe you may be right; for he changed sides mair than ance, and wha kens whilk he

died for? But always he was there, and so was I; a fight there was, and I never wish to see another!

The entrance of the provost here interrupted their desultory conversation. 'We have determined,' he said, 'captain, that your ship shall go round to Stromness, or Scalpa Flow, to take in stores, in order that there may be no more quarrels between the fair folks and your seamen. And as you wish to stay on shore to see the fair, we intend to send a respectable gentleman on board your vessel to pilot her round the Mainland, as the navigation is but ticklish.'

'Spoken like a quiet and sensible magistrate, Mr. Mayor,' said Cleveland, 'and no otherwise than as I expected. And what gentleman is to honour our quarter-deck during my absence?'

'We have fixed that, too, Captain Cleveland,' said the provost; 'you may be sure we were each more desirous than another to go upon so pleasant a voyage, and in such good company; but, being fair time, most of us have some affairs in hand. I myself, in respect of my office, cannot be well spared — the eldest bailie's wife is lying-in — the treasurer does not agree with the sea — two bailies have the gout — the other two are absent from town — and the other fifteen members of council are all engaged on particular business.'

'All that I can tell you, Mr. Mayor,' said Cleveland, raising his voice, 'is, that I expect —'

'A moment's patience, if you please, captain,' said the provost, interrupting him — 'So that we have come to the resolution that our worthy Mr. Triptolemus Yellowley, who is factor to the Lord Chamberlain of these islands, shall, in respect of his official situation, be preferred to the honour and pleasure of accompanying you.'

'Me!' said the astonished Triptolemus; 'what the devil should I do going on your voyages? my business is on dry land.'

'The gentlemen want a pilot,' said the provost, whispering to him, 'and there is no eviting to give them one.'

'Do they want to go bump on shore, then?' said the factor, 'how the devil should I pilot them, that never touched rudder in my life?'

'Hush! — hush! — be silent!' said the provost; 'if the people of this town heard ye say such a word, your utility, and respect, and rank, and everything else, is clean gone! No man is anything with us island folks unless he can hand, reef, and steer.'

Besides, it is but a mere form ; and we will send old Pate Sinclair to help you. You will have nothing to do but to eat, drink, and be merry all day.'

'Eat and drink!' said the factor, not able to comprehend exactly why this piece of duty was pressed upon him so hastily, and yet not very capable of resisting or extricating himself from the toils of the more knowing provost — 'eat and drink! That is all very well ; but, to speak truth, the sea does not agree with me any more than with the treasurer, and I have always a better appetite for eating and drinking ashore.'

'Hush! hush! hush!' again said the provost, in an undertone of earnest expostulation ; 'would you actually ruin your character out and out? A factor of the High Chamberlain of the Isles of Orkney and Zetland, and not like the sea! you might as well say you are a Highlander, and do not like whisky!'

'You must settle it somehow, gentlemen,' said Captain Cleveland ; 'it is time we were under weigh. Mr. Triptolemus Yellowley, are we to be honoured with your company?'

'I am sure, Captain Cleveland,' stammered the factor, 'I would have no objection to go anywhere with you, only —'

'He has no objection,' said the provost, catching at the first limb of the sentence, without awaiting the conclusion.

'He has no objection,' cried the treasurer.

'He has no objection,' sung out the whole four bailies together ; and the fifteen councillors, all catching up the same phrase of assent, repeated it in chorus, with the additions of — 'good man' — 'public-spirited' — 'honourable gentleman' — 'burgh eternally obliged' — 'where will you find such a worthy factor?' and so forth.

Astonished and confused at the praises with which he was overwhelmed on all sides, and in no shape understanding the nature of the transaction that was going forward, the astounded and overwhelmed agriculturist became incapable of resisting the part of the Kirkwall Curtius thus insidiously forced upon him, and was delivered up by Captain Cleveland to his party, with the strictest injunctions to treat him with honour and attention. Goffe and his companions began now to lead him off, amid the applauses of the whole meeting, after the manner in which the victim of ancient days was garlanded and greeted by shouts, when consigned to the priests, for the purpose of being led to the altar and knocked on the head, a sacrifice for the commonweal. It was while they thus conducted, and in a manner forced, him out of the council-chamber, that poor Trip-

toleumus, much alarmed at finding that Cleveland, in whom he had some confidence, was to remain behind the party, tried, when just going out at the door, the effect of one remonstrating bellow. 'Nay, but, provost! — captain! — bailies! — treasurer! — councillors! if Captain Cleveland does not go aboard to protect me, it is nae bargain, and go I will not, unless I am trailed with cart-ropes!'

His protest was, however, drowned in the unanimous chorus of the magistrates and councillors, returning him thanks for his public spirit — wishing him a good voyage — and praying to Heaven for his happy and speedy return. Stunned and overwhelmed, and thinking, if he had any distinct thoughts at all, that remonstrance was vain, where friends and strangers seemed alike determined to carry the point against him, Triptoleumus, without farther resistance, suffered himself to be conducted into the street, where the pirate's boat's crew, assembling around him, began to move slowly towards the quay, many of the townsfolk following out of curiosity, but without any attempt at interference or annoyance; for the pacific compromise which the dexterity of the first magistrate had achieved was unanimously approved of as a much better settlement of the disputes betwixt them and the strangers than might have been attained by the dubious issue of an appeal to arms.

Meanwhile, as they went slowly along, Triptoleumus had time to study the appearance, countenance, and dress of those into whose hands he had been thus delivered, and began to imagine that he read in their looks not only the general expression of a desperate character, but some sinister intentions directed particularly towards himself. He was alarmed by the truculent looks of Goffe, in particular, who, holding his arm with a gripe which resembled in delicacy of touch the compression of a smith's vice, cast on him from the outer corner of his eye oblique glances, like those which the eagle throws upon the prey which she has clutched, ere yet she proceeds, as it is technically called, to plume it. At length Yellowley's fears got so far the better of his prudence that he fairly asked his terrible conductor, in a sort of crying whisper, 'Are you going to murder me, captain, in the face of the laws baith of God and man?'

'Hold your peace, if you are wise,' said Goffe, who had his own reasons for desiring to increase the panic of his captive; 'we have not murdered a man these three months, and why should you put us in mind of it?'

'You are but joking, I hope, good worthy captain!' replied

Triptolemus. 'This is worse than witches, dwarfs, dirking of whales, coupling of cobbles, put all together! — this is an away-ganging crop, with a vengeance! What good, in Heaven's name, would murdering me do to you?'

'We might have some pleasure in it, at least,' said Goffe. 'Look these fellows in the face, and see if you see one among them that would not rather kill a man than let it alone? But we will speak more of that when you have first had a taste of the bilboes — unless, indeed, you come down with a handsome round handful of Chili boards¹ for your ransom.'

'As I shall live by bread, captain,' answered the factor, 'that misbegotten dwarf has carried off the whole hornful of silver!'

'A cat-and-nine-tails will make you find it again,' said Goffe, gruffly; 'flogging and pickling is an excellent receipt to bring a man's wealth into his mind; twisting a bowstring round his skull till the eyes start a little is a very good remembrancer too.'

'Captain,' replied Yellowley, stoutly, 'I have no money; seldom can improvers have. We turn pasture to tillage, and barley into aits, and heather into greensward, and the poor "yarpha," as the benighted creatures here call their peat-bogs, into baitle grass-land; but we seldom make anything of it that comes back to our ain pouch. The carles and the cart-avers make it all, and the carles and the cart-avers eat it all, and the deil clink down with it!'

'Well — well,' said Goffe, 'if you be really a poor fellow, as you pretend, I'll stand your friend'; then, inclining his head so as to reach the ear of the factor, who stood on tiptoe with anxiety, he said, 'if you love your life, do not enter the boat with us.'

'But how am I to get away from you, while you hold me so fast by the arm that I could not get off if the whole year's crop of Scotland depended on it?'

'Hark ye, you gudgeon,' said Goffe, 'just when you come to the water's edge, and when the fellows are jumping in and taking their oars, slue yourself round suddenly to the larboard — I will let go your arm — and then cut and run for your life!'

Triptolemus did as he was desired, Goffe's willing hand relaxed the grasp as he had promised, the agriculturist trundled off like a football that has just received a strong impulse from

¹ Commonly called by landsmen Spanish dollars.

the foot of one of the players, and, with celerity which surprised himself as well as all beholders, fled through the town of Kirkwall. Nay, such was the impetus of his retreat that, as if the grasp of the pirate was still open to pounce upon him, he never stopped till he had traversed the whole town and attained the open country on the other side. They who had seen him that day -- his hat and wig lost in the sudden effort he had made to bolt forward, his cravat awry, and his waistcoat unbuttoned -- and who had an opportunity of comparing his round spherical form and short legs with the portentous speed at which he scoured through the street, might well say that, if fury ministers arms, fear confers wings. His very mode of running seemed to be that peculiar to his fleecy care, for, like a ram in the midst of his race, he ever and anon encouraged himself by a great bouncing attempt at a leap, though there were no obstacles in his way.

There was no pursuit after the agriculturist; and though a musket or two were presented, for the purpose of sending a leaden messenger after him, yet Goffe, turning peacemaker for once in his life, so exaggerated the dangers that would attend a breach of the truce with the people of Kirkwall, that he prevailed upon the boat's crew to forbear any active hostilities, and to pull off for their vessel with all despatch.

The burghers, who regarded the escape of Triptolemus as a triumph on their side, gave the boat three cheers by way of an insulting farewell; while the magistrates, on the other hand, entertained great anxiety respecting the probable consequences of this breach of articles between them and the pirates; and, could they have seized upon the fugitive very privately, instead of complimenting him with a civic feast in honour of the agility which he displayed, it is likely they might have delivered the runaway hostage once more into the hands of his foemen. But it was impossible to set their face publicly to such an act of violence, and therefore they contented themselves with closely watching Cleveland, whom they determined to make responsible for any aggression which might be attempted by the pirates. Cleveland, on his part, easily conjectured that the motive which Goffe had for suffering his hostage to escape was to leave him answerable for all consequences, and, relying more on the attachment and intelligence of his friend and adherent, Frederick Altamont, *alias* Jack Bunce, than on anything else, expected the result with considerable anxiety, since the magistrates, though they continued to treat him with civility, plainly inti-

mated they would regulate his treatment by the behaviour of the crew, though he no longer commanded them.

It was not, however, without some reason that he reckoned on the devoted fidelity of Bunce ; for no sooner did that trusty adherent receive from Goffe and the boat's crew the news of the escape of Triptolemus, than he immediately concluded it had been favoured by the late captain, in order that, Cleveland being either put to death or consigned to hopeless imprisonment, Goffe might be called upon to resume the command of the vessel.

'But the drunken old boatswain shall miss his mark,' said Bunce to his confederate Fletcher ; 'or else I am contented to quit the name of Altamont, and be called Jack Bunce, or Jack Duncie, if you like it better, to the end of the chapter.'

Availing himself accordingly of a sort of nautical eloquence, which his enemies termed slack-jaw, Bunce set before the crew, in a most animated manner, the disgrace which they all sustained by their captain remaining, as he was pleased to term it, in the bilboes, without any hostage to answer for his safety ; and succeeded so far that, besides exciting a good deal of discontent against Goffe, he brought the crew to the resolution of seizing the first vessel of a tolerable appearance, and declaring that the ship, crew, and cargo should be dealt with according to the usage which Cleveland should receive on shore. It was judged at the same time proper to try the faith of the Orcadians, by removing from the roadstead of Kirkwall, and going round to that of Stromness, where, according to the treaty betwixt Provost Torfe and Captain Cleveland, they were to victual their sloop. They resolved, in the meantime, to entrust the command of the vessel to a council, consisting of Goffe, the boatswain, and Bunce himself, until Cleveland should be in a situation to resume his command.

These resolutions having been proposed and acceded to, they weighed anchor and got their sloop under sail, without experiencing any opposition or annoyance from the battery, which relieved them of one important apprehension incidental to their situation.

CHAPTER XXXVI

Clap on more sail, pursue, up with your fights,
Give fire, — he is lay prize, or ocean whelm them all !

SHAKESPEARE.

A VERY handsome brig, which, with several other vessels, was the property of Magnus Troil, the great Zetland udaller, had received on board that magnate himself, his two lovely daughters, and the facetious Clard Halero, who, for friendship's sake chiefly, and the love of beauty proper to his poetical calling, attended them on their journey from Zetland to the capital of Orkney, to which Norna had referred them, as the place where her mystical oracles should at length receive a satisfactory explanation.

They passed, at a distance, the tremendous cliffs of the lonely spot of earth called the Fair Isle, which, at an equal distance from either archipelago, lies in the sea which divides Orkney from Zetland ; and at length, after some baffling winds, made the Start of Sanda. Off the headland so named, they became involved in a strong current, well known, by those who frequent these seas, as the Roost of the Start, which carried them considerably out of their course, and, joined to an adverse wind, forced them to keep on the east side of the island of Stronsa, and finally compelled them to lie by for the night in Papa Sound, since the navigation in dark or thick weather, amongst so many low islands, is neither pleasant nor safe.

On the ensuing morning they resumed their voyage under more favourable auspices ; and, coasting along the island of Stronsa, whose flat, verdant, and comparatively fertile shores formed a strong contrast to the dun hills and dark cliffs of their own islands, they doubled the cape called the Lamb Head, and stood away for Kirkwall.

They had scarce opened the beautiful bay betwixt Pomona and Shapinsha, and the sisters were admiring the massive church of St. Magnus, as it was first seen to rise from amongst the

inferior buildings of Kirkwall, when the eyes of Magnus and of Claud Halero were attracted by an object which they thought more interesting. This was an armed sloop, with her sails set, which had just left the anchorage in the bay, and was running before the wind by which the brig of the Udaller was beating in.

'A tight thing that, by my ancestors' bones!' said the old Udaller; 'but I cannot make out of what country, as she shows no colours. Spanish built, I should think her.'

'Ay — ay,' said Claud Halero, 'she has all the look of it. She runs before the wind that we must battle with, which is the wonted way of the world. As glorious John says —

With roomy deck, and guns of mighty strength,
Whose low-laid mouths each mountain billow laves,
Deep in her draught, and warlike in her length,
She seems a sea-wasp flying on the waves.

Brenda could not help telling Halero, when he had spouted this stanza with great enthusiasm, 'That though the description was more like a first-rate than a sloop, yet the simile of the sea-wasp served but indifferently for either.'

'A sea-wasp!' said Magnus, looking with some surprise, as the sloop, shifting her course, suddenly bore down on them. 'Egad, I wish she may not show us presently that she has a sting!'

What the Udaller said in jest was fulfilled in earnest: for, without hoisting colours or hailing, two shots were discharged from the sloop, one of which ran dipping and dancing upon the water just ahead of the Zetlander's bows, while the other went through his mainsail.

Magnus caught up a speaking-trumpet and hailed the sloop, to demand what she was and what was the meaning of this unprovoked aggression. He was only answered by the stern command, 'Down topsails instantly, and lay your mainsail to the mast; you shall see who we are presently.'

There were no means within the reach of possibility by which obedience could be evaded, where it would instantly have been enforced by a broadside: and, with much fear on the part of the sisters and Claud Halero, mixed with anger and astonishment on that of the Udaller, the brig lay-to to await the commands of the captors.

The sloop immediately lowered a boat, with six armed hands, commanded by Jack Bunce, which rowed directly for their prize. As they approached her, Claud Halero whispered to the Udaller, 'If what we hear of buccaniers be true, these men, with their silk scarfs and vests, have the very cut of them.'

'My daughters! my daughters!' muttered Magnus to himself, with such an agony as only a father could feel. 'Go down below and hide yourselves, girls, while I——'

He threw down his speaking-trumpet, and seized on a handspike, while his daughters, more afraid of the consequences of his fiery temper to himself than of anything else, hung round him and begged him to make no resistance. Claud Halero united his entreaties, adding, 'It were best pacify the fellows with fair words. They might,' he said, 'be Dunkirkers, or insolent man-of-war's-men on a frolic.'

'No — no,' answered Magnus, 'it is the sloop which the jagger told us of. But I will take your advice: I will have patience for these girls' sakes; yet ——'

He had no time to conclude the sentence, for Bunce jumped on board with his party, and drawing his cutlass, struck it upon the companion-ladder and declared the ship was theirs.

'By what warrant or authority do you stop us on the high seas?' said Magnus.

'Here are half a dozen of warrants,' said Bunce, showing the pistols which were hung round him, according to a pirate fashion already mentioned, 'choose which you like, old gentleman, and you shall have the perusal of it presently.'

'That is to say, you intend to rob us?' said Magnus. 'So be it — we have no means to help it — only be civil to the women, and take what you please from the vessel. There is not much but I will and can make it worth more if you use us well.'

'Civil to the women!' said Fletcher, who had also come on board with the gang — 'when were we else than civil to them? ay, and kind to boot? Look here, Jack Bunce! what a trim-going little thing here is! By G —, she shall make a cruise with us, come of old Squaretoes what will!'

He seized upon the terrified Brenda with one hand, and insolently pulled back with the other the hood of the mantle in which she had muffled herself.

'Help, father! — help, Minna!' exclaimed the affrighted girl; unconsciously at the moment, that they were unable to render her assistance.

Magnus again uplifted the handspike, but Bunce stopped his hand. 'A rest, father!' he said, 'or you will make a bad voyage of it presently. And you, Fletcher, let go the girl!'

'And d — n me! why should I let her go?' said Fletcher.

'Because I command you, Dick,' said the other, 'and because

I'll make it a quarrel else. And now let me know, beauties, is there one of you bears that queer heathen name of Minna, for which I have a certain sort of regard ?'

'Gallant sir !' said Halcro, 'unquestionably it is because you have some poetry in your heart.'

'I have had enough of it in my mouth in my time,' answered Bunce ; 'but that day is by, old gentleman ; however, I shall soon find out which of these girls is Minna. Throw back your mufflings from your faces, and don't be afraid, my Lindamiras : no one here shall meddle with you to do you wrong. On my soul, two pretty wenches ! I wish I were at sea in an egg-shell, and a rock under my lee-bow, if I would wish a better leaguer lass than the worst of them ! Hark you, my girls ; which of you would like to swing in a rover's hammock ? you should have gold for the gathering !'

The terrified maidens clung close together, and grew pale at the bold and familiar language of the desperate libertine.

'Nay, don't be frightened,' said he ; 'no one shall serve under the noble Altamont but by her own free choice : there is no pressing amongst gentlemen of fortune. And do not look so shy upon me neither, as if I spoke of what you never thought of before. One of you, at least, has heard of Captain Cleveland, the rover.'

Brenda grew still paler, but the blood mounted at once in Minna's cheeks, on hearing the name of her lover thus unexpectedly introduced ; for the scene was in itself so confounding, that the idea of the vessel's being the consort of which Cleveland had spoken at Burgh-Westra had occurred to no one save the Udaller.

'I see how it is,' said Bunce with a familiar nod, 'and I will hold my course accordingly. You need not be afraid of any injury, father,' he added, addressing Magnus familiarly ; 'and though I have made many a pretty girl pay tribute in my time, yet yours shall go ashore without either wrong or ransom.'

'If you will assure me of that,' said Magnus, 'you are as welcome to the brig and cargo as ever I made man welcome to a can of punch.'

'And it is no bad thing that same can of punch,' said Bunce, 'if we had any one that could mix it well.'

'I will do it,' said Claud Halcro, 'with any man that ever squeezed lemon — Eric Scambester, the punch-maker of Burgh-Westra, being alone excepted.'

'And you are within a grapnel's length of him, too,' said the

Udaller. 'Go down below, my girls,' he added, 'and send up the rare old man and the punch-bowl.'

'The punch-bowl!' said Fletcher; 'I say, the bucket, d--n me! Talk of bow' in the cabin of a paltry merchantman, but not to gentlemen st. lers—rovers, I would say,' correcting himself, as he observed that Bunce looked sour at the mistake.

'And I say, these two pretty girls shall stay on deck and fill my can,' said Bunce; 'I deserve some attendance, at least, for all my generosity.'

'And they shall fill mine, too,' said Fletcher—'they shall fill it to the brim! and I will have a kiss for every drop they spill—broil me if I won't!'

'Why, then, I tell you, you shan't!' said Bunce; 'for I'll be d--d if any one shall kiss Minna but one, and that's neither you nor I; and her other little bit of a consort shall 'scape for company; there are plenty of willing wenches in Orkney. And so, now I think on it, these girls shall go down below and bolt themselves into the cabin; and we shall have the punch up here on deck, *al fresco*, as the old gentleman proposes.'

'Why, Jack, I wish you knew your own mind,' said Fletcher; 'I have been your messmate these two years, and I love you; and yet flay me like a wild bullock, if you have not as many humours as a monkey! And what shall we have to make a little fun of, since you have sent the girls down below?'

'Why, we will have Master Punch-maker here,' answered Bunce, 'to give us toasts and sing us songs. And, in the meantime, you there, stand by sheets and tacks, and get her under way! and you, steersman, as you would keep your brains in your skull, keep her under the stern of the sloop. If you attempt to play us any trick, I will scuttle your scone as if it were an old calabash!'

The vessel was accordingly got under way, and moved slowly on in the wake of the sloop, which, as had been previously agreed upon, held her course, not to return to the Bay of Kirkwall, but for an excellent roadstead called Inganess Bay, formed by a promontory which extends to the eastward two or three miles from the Orcadian metropolis, and where the vessels might conveniently lie at anchor, while the rovers maintained any communication with the magistrates which the new state of things seemed to require.

Meantime, Claud Halero had exerted his utmost talents in compounding a bucketful of punch for the use of the pirates, which they drank out of large cans; the ordinary seamen, as

well as Bunce and Fletcher, who acted as officers, dipping them into the bucket with very little ceremony, as they came and went upon their duty. Magnus, who was particularly apprehensive that liquor might awaken the brutal passions of these desperadoes, was yet so much astonished at the quantities which he saw them drink, without producing any visible effect upon their reason, that he could not help expressing his surprise to Bunce himself, who, wild as he was, yet appeared by far the most civil and conversable of his party, and whom he was, perhaps, desirous to conciliate by a compliment of which all boon toppers know the value.

'Bones of St. Magnus!' said the Udaller, 'I used to think I took off my can like a gentleman; but to see your men swallow, captain, one would think their stomachs were as bottomless as the hole of Laifell in Foula, which I have sounded myself with a line of a hundred fathoms. By my soul, the bicker of St. Magnus were but a sip to them!'

'In our way of life, sir,' answered Bunce, 'there is no stint till duty calls or the puncheon is drunk out.'

'By my word, sir,' said Claud Halcro, 'I believe there is not one of your people but could drink out the mickle bicker of Scarpa, which was always offered to the Bishop of Orkney brimful of the best bummock that ever was brewed.'¹

'If drinking could make them bishops,' said Bunce, 'I should have a reverend crew of them; but as they have no other clerical qualities about them, I do not propose that they shall get drunk to-day; so we will cut our drink with a song.'

'And I'll sing it, by ——!' said or swore Dick Fletcher, and instantly struck up the old ditty —

'It was a ship, and a ship of fame,
Launch'd off the stocks, bound for the main,
With an hundred and fifty brisk young men,
All pick'd and chosen every one.'

'I would sooner be keel-hauled than hear that song over again,' said Bunce; 'and confound your lantern jaws, you can squeeze nothing else out of them!'

'By ——,' said Fletcher, 'I will sing my song, whether you like it or no'; and again he sung, with the doleful tone of a north-easter whistling through sheets and shrouds —

'Captain Glen was our captain's name;
A very gallant and brisk young man,
As bold a sailor as e'er went to sea;
And we were bound for High Barbary.'

¹ Liquor brewed for a Christmas treat.

'I tell you again,' said Bunce, 'we will have none of your screech-owl music here; and I'll be d—d if you shall sit here and make that infernal noise!'

'Why, then, I'll tell you what,' said Fletcher, getting up, 'I'll sing when I walk about, and I hope there is no harm in that, Jack Bunce.' And so, getting up from his seat, he began to walk up and down the sloop, croaking out his long and disastrous ballad.

'You see how I manage them,' said Bunce, with a smile of self-applause. 'Allow that fellow two strides on his own way, and you make a mutineer of him for life; but I tie him strict up, and he follows me as kindly as a fowler's spaniel after he has got a good beating. And now your toast and your song, sir,' addressing Halero; 'or rather your song without your toast. I have got a toast for myself. Here is success to all roving blades, and confusion to all honest men!'

'I should be sorry to drink that toast, if I could help it,' said Magnus Troil.

'What! you reckon yourself one of the honest folks, I warrant?' said Bunce. 'Tell me your trade, and I'll tell you what I think of it. As for the punch-maker here, I knew him at first glance to be a tailor, who has, therefore, no more pretensions to be honest than he has not to be mangy. But you are some High-Dutch skipper, I warrant me, that tramples on the cross when he is in Japan, and denies his religion for a day's gain.'

'No,' replied the Udaller, 'I am a gentleman of Zetland.'

'Oh, what!' retorted the satirical Mr. Bunce, 'you are come from the happy climate where gin is a groat a-bottle, and where there is daylight for ever?'

'At your service, captain,' said the Udaller, suppressing with much pain some disposition to resent these jests on his country, although under every risk and at all disadvantage.

'At *my* service!' said Bunce. 'Ay, if there was a rope stretched from the wreck to the beach, you would be at my service to cut the hawser, make flotsome and jetsome of ship and cargo, and well if you did not give me a rap on the head with the back of the cutty-axe; and you call yourself honest! But never mind—here goes the aforesaid toast—and do you sing me a song, Mr. Fashioner; and look it be as good as your punch.'

Halero, internally praying for the powers of a new Timotheus, to turn his strain and check his auditor's pride, as glorious

John had it, began a heart-soothing ditty with the following lines : —

‘ Maidens fresh as fairest rose,
Listen to this lay of mine.’

‘ I will hear nothing of maidens or roses,’ said Bunce : it puts me in mind what sort of a cargo we have got on board ; and, by —, I will be true to my messmate and my captain as long as I can ! And now I think on ’t, I ’ll have no more punch either ; that last cup made innovation, and I am not to play Cassio to-night ; and if I drink not, nobody else shall.’

So saying, he manfully kicked over the bucket, which, notwithstanding the repeated applications made to it, was still half full, got up from his seat, shook himself a little to rights, as he expressed it, cocked his hat, and, walking the quarter-deck with an air of dignity, gave, by word and signal, the orders for bringing the ships to anchor, which were readily obeyed by both, Goffe being then, in all probability, past any rational state of interference.

The Udaller, in the meantime, condoled with Halero on their situation. ‘ It is bad enough,’ said the tough old Norseman, ‘ for these are rank rogues ; and yet, were it not for the girls, I should not fear them. That young vapouring fellow, who seems to command, is not such a born devil as he might have been.’

‘ He has queer humours, though,’ said Halero ; ‘ and I wish we were loose from him. To kick down a bucket half full of the best punch ever was made, and to cut me short in the sweetest song I ever wrote — I promise you, I do not know what he may do next — it is next door to madness.’

Meanwhile, the ships being brought to anchor, the valiant Lieutenant Bunce called upon Fletcher, and, resuming his seat by his unwilling passengers, he told them they should see what message he was about to send to the wittols of Kirkwall, as they were something concerned in it. ‘ It shall run in Dick’s name,’ he said, ‘ as well as in mine. I love to give the poor young fellows a little countenance now and then — don’t I, Dick, you d—d stupid ass ?’

‘ Why, yes, Jack Bunce,’ said Dick, ‘ I can’t say but as you do, only you are always bullocking one about something or other, too ; but, howsomdever, d’ ye see —’

‘ Enough said — belay your jaw, Dick,’ said Bunce, and proceeded to write his epistle, which, being read aloud, proved to

be of the following tenor : — ' For the Mayor and Aldermen of Kirkwall — Gentlemen, As, contrary to your good faith given, you have not sent us on board a hostage for the safety of our captain, remaining on shore at your request, these come to tell you, we are not thus to be trifled with. We have already in our possession a brig, with a family of distinction, its owners and passengers ; and as you deal with our captain, so will we deal with them in every respect. And as this is the first, so assure yourselves it shall not be the last, damage which we will do to your town and trade, if you do not send on board our captain, and supply us with stores according to treaty.

' Given on board the brig "Mergoose" of Burgh-Westra, lying in Inganess Bay. Witness our hands, commanders of the "Fortune's Favourite," and gentlemen adventurers.'

He then subscribed himself Frederick Altamont, and handed the letter to Fletcher, who read the said subscription with much difficulty ; and, admiring the sound of it very much, swore he would have a new name himself, and the rather that Fletcher was the most crabbed word to spell and construe, he believed, in the whole dictionary. He subscribed himself accordingly, Timothy Tugmutton.

' Will you not add a few lines to the coxcombs ? ' said Bunce, addressing Magnus.

' Not I, returned the Udaller, stubborn in his ideas of right and wrong, even in so formidable an emergency. ' The magistrates of Kirkwall know their duty, and were I they — ' But here the recollection that his daughters were at the mercy of these ruffians blanked the bold visage of Magnus Troil, and checked the defiance which was just about to issue from his lips.

' D—n me,' said Bunce, who easily conjectured what was passing in the mind of his prisoner — ' that pause would have told well on the stage : it would have brought down pit, box, and gallery, egad, as Bayes has it.'

' I will hear nothing of Bayes,' said Claud Halcro, himself a little elevated, ' it is an impudent satire on glorious John ; but he tickled Buckingham off for it —

In the first rank of these did Zimri stand,
A man so various —'

' Hold your peace ! ' said Bunce, drowning the voice of the admirer of Dryden in louder and more vehement asseveration, ' the *Rehearsal* is the best farce ever was written ; and I'll

make him kiss the gunner's daughter that denies it. Deny me, I was the best Prince Prettyman ever walked the boards —

Sometimes a fisher's son, sometimes a prince.

But let us to business. Hark ye, old gentleman (to Magnus), you have a sort of sulkiness about you, for which some of my profession would cut your ears out of your head, and broil them for your dinner with red pepper. I have known Goffe do so to a poor devil, for looking sour and dangerous when he saw his sloop go to Davy Jones's locker with his only son on board. But I'm a spirit of another sort; and if you or the ladies are ill-used, it shall be the Kirkwall people's fault, and not mine, and that's fair; and so you had better let them know your condition, and your circumstances, and so forth — and that's fair, too.'

Magnus, thus exhorted, took up the pen and attempted to write; but his high spirit so struggled with his paternal anxiety that his hand refused its office. 'I cannot help it,' he said, after one or two illegible attempts to write — 'I cannot form a letter, if all our lives depended upon it.'

And he could not, with his utmost efforts, so suppress the convulsive emotions which he experienced, but that they agitated his whole frame. The willow which bends to the tempest often escapes better than the oak which resists it; and so, in great calamities, it sometimes happens that light and frivolous spirits recover their elasticity and presence of mind sooner than those of a loftier character. In the present case, Claud Halero was fortunately able to perform the task which the deeper feelings of his friend and patron refused. He took the pen, and, in as few words as possible, explained the situation in which they were placed, and the cruel risks to which they were exposed, insinuating at the same time, as delicately as he could express it, that, to the magistrates of the country, the life and honour of its citizens should be a dearer object than even the apprehension or punishment of the guilty; taking care, however, to qualify the last expression as much as possible, for fear of giving umbrage to the pirates.

Bunce read over the letter, which fortunately met his approbation; and, on seeing the name of Claud Halero at the bottom, he exclaimed, in great surprise, and with more energetic expressions of asseveration than we choose to record — 'Why, you are the little fellow that played the fiddle to old Manager Gad-

about's company, at Hogs Norton, the first season I came out there ! I thought I knew your catchword of glorious John.'

At another time this recognition might not have been very grateful to Halero's minstrel pride ; but, as matters stood with him, the discovery of a golden mine could not have made him more happy. He instantly remembered the very hopeful young performer who came out in *Don Sebastian*, and judiciously added, that the muse of glorious John had never received such excellent support during the time that he was first (he might have added, and only) violin to Mr. Gadabout's company.

'Why, yes,' said Bunce, 'I believe you are right : I think I might have shaken the scene as well as Booth or Betterton either. But I was destined to figure on other boards (striking his foot upon the deck), and I believe I must stick by them till I find no board at all to support me. But now, old acquaintance, I will do something for you ; slue yourself this way a bit — I would have you solus.' They leaned over the taffrail, while Bunce whispered with more seriousness than he usually showed, 'I am sorry for this honest old heart of Norway pine — blight me if I am not — and for the daughters too ; besides, I have my own reasons for befriending one of them. I can be a wild fellow with a willing lass of the game ; but to such decent and innocent creatures — d—n me, I am Scipio at Numantia, and Alexander in the tent of Darius. You remember how I touch off Alexander ? (here he started into heroics) —

Thus from the grave I rise to save my love ;
All draw your swords, with wings of lightning move.
When I rush on, sure none will dare to stay ;
'Tis beauty calls, and glory shows the way.'

Claud Halero failed not to bestow the necessary commendations on his declamation, declaring that, in his opinion as an honest man, he had always thought Mr. Altamont's giving that speech far superior in tone and energy to Betterton.

Bunce, or Altamont, wrung his hand tenderly. 'Ah, you flatter me, my dear friend,' he said ; 'yet, why had not the public some of your judgment ! I should not then have been at this pass. Heaven knows, my dear Mr. Halero — Heaven knows with what pleasure I could keep you on board with me, just that I might have one friend who loves as much to hear as I do to recite the choicest pieces of our finest dramatic authors. The most of us are beasts ; and, for the Kirkwall hostage yonder, he

uses me, egad, as I use Fletcher, I think, and huffs me the more, the more I do for him. But how delightful would it be in a tropic night, when the ship was hanging on the breeze, with broad and steady sail, for me to rehearse *Alexander*, with you for my pit, box, and gallery! Nay -- for you are a follower of the Muses, as I remember -- who knows but you and I might be the means of inspiring, like Orpheus and Eurydice, a pure taste into our companions, and softening their manners, while we excited their better feelings?

This was spoken with so much unction, that Claud Halero began to be afraid he had both made the actual punch over potent and mixed too many bewitching ingredients in the cup of flattery which he had administered; and that, under the influence of both potions, the sentimental pirate might detain him by force, merely to realise the scenes which his imagination presented. The conjuncture was, however, too delicate to admit of any active effort on Halero's part to redeem his blunder, and therefore he only returned the tender pressure of his friend's hand, and uttered the interjection 'alas!' in as pathetic a tone as he could.

Bunce immediately resumed: 'You are right, my friend, these are but vain visions of felicity, and it remains but for the unhappy Altamont to serve the friend to whom he is now to bid farewell. I have determined to put you and the two girls ashore, with Fletcher for your protection; and so call up the young women, and let them begone before the devil get aboard of me or of some one else. You will carry my letter to the magistrates, and second it with your own eloquence, and assure them that, if they hurt but one hair of Cleveland's head, there will be the devil to pay, and no pitch hot.'

Relieved at heart by this unexpected termination of Bunce's harangue, Halero descended the companion-ladder two steps at a time, and, knocking at the cabin door, could scarce find intelligible language enough to say his errand. The sisters hearing, with unexpected joy, that they were to be set ashore, muffled themselves in their cloaks, and, when they learned that the boat was hoisted out, came hastily on deck, where they were apprised, for the first time, to their great horror, that their father was still to remain on board of the pirate.

'We will remain with him at every risk,' said Minna; 'we may be of some assistance to him, were it but for an instant: we will live and die with him!'

'We shall aid him more surely,' said Brenda, who compre-

headed the nature of their situation better than Minna, 'by interesting the people of Kirkwall to grant these gentlemen's demands.'

'Spoken like an angel of sense and beauty,' said Bunce; 'and now away with you; for, d—n me, if this is not like having a lighted linstock in the powder room: if you speak another word more, confound me if I know how I shall bring myself to part with you!'

'Go, in God's name, my daughters,' said Magnus. 'I am in God's hand; and when you are gone I shall care little for myself; and I shall think and say, as long as I live, that this good gentleman deserves a better trade. Go — go — away with you!' for they yet lingered in unwillingness to leave him.

'Stay not to kiss,' said Bunce, 'for fear I be tempted to ask my share. Into the boat with you — yet stop an instant.' He drew the three captives apart. 'Fletcher,' said he, 'will answer for the rest of the fellows, and will see you safe off the sea-beach. But how to answer for Fletcher I know not, except by trusting Mr. Halero with this little guarantee.'

He offered the minstrel a small double-barrelled pistol, which, he said, was loaded with a brace of balls. Minna observed Halero's hand tremble as he stretched it out to take the weapon. 'Give it to me, sir,' she said, taking it from the outlaw; 'and trust to me for defending my sister and myself.'

'Bravo — bravo!' shouted Bunce. 'There spoke a wench worthy of Cleveland, the King of Rovers!'

'Cleveland!' repeated Minna, 'do you then know that Cleveland whom you have twice named?'

'Know him? Is there a man alive,' said Bunce, 'that knows better than I do the best and stoutest fellow ever stepped betwixt stem and stern? When he is out of the bilboes, as please Heaven, he shall soon be, I reckon to see you come on board of us and reign the queen of every sea we sail over. You have got the little guardian; I suppose you know how to use it? If Fletcher behaves ill to you, you need only draw up this piece of iron with your thumb, so; and if he persists, it is but crooking your pretty forefinger thus, and I shall lose the most dutiful messmate that ever man had, though, d—n the dog, he will deserve his death if he disobeys my orders. And now, into the boat; but stay, one kiss for Cleveland's sake.'

Brenda, in deadly terror, endured his courtesy; but Minna, stepping back with disdain, offered her hand. Bunce laughed, but kissed, with a theatrical air, the fair hand which she ex-

tended as a ransom for her lips, and at length the sisters and Halcro were placed in the boat, which rowed off under Fletcher's command.

Bunce stood on the quarter-deck, soliloquising after the manner of his original profession. 'Were this told at Port-Royal now, or at the Isle of Providence, or in the Petits Guaves, I wonder what they would say of me! Why, that I was a good-natured milksop—a Jack-a-Lent—an ass. Well, let them. I have done enough of bad to think about it; it is worth while doing one good action, if it were but for the rarity of the thing, and to put one in good humour with oneself.' Then turning to Magnus Troil, he proceeded, 'By——these are bona-robas, these daughters of yours! The eldest would make her fortune on the London boards. What a dashing attitude the wench had with her, as she seized the pistol! d—n me, that touch would have brought the house down! What a Roxalana the jade would have made!' for, in his oratory, Bunce, like Sancho's gossip, Thomas Cecial, was apt to use the most energetic word which came to hand, without accurately considering its propriety. 'I would give my share of the next prize to hear her spout—

Away, begone, and give a whirlwind room,
Or I will blow you up like dust. Avaunt!
Madness but meanly represents my rage.

And then, again, that little, soft, shy, tearful trembler, for Statira, to hear her recite—

He speaks the kindest words, and looks such things,
Vows with such passion, swears with so much grace,
That 't is a kind of heaven to be deluded by him.

What a play we might have run up! I was a beast not to think of it before I sent them off—I to be Alexander—Claud Halcro, Lysimachus—this old gentleman might have made a Clytus for a pinch. I was an idiot not to think of it!

There was much in this effusion which might have displeased the Udaller; but, to speak truth, he paid no attention to it. His eye, and finally his spy-glass, were employed in watching the return of his daughters to the shore. He saw them land on the beach, and, accompanied by Halcro and another man (Fletcher, doubtless), he saw them ascend the acclivity and proceed upon the road to Kirkwall; and he could even distinguish that Minna, as if considering herself as the guardian of the party, walked a little aloof from the rest, on the watch,

as it seemed, against surprise, and ready to act as occasion should require. At length, as the Udaller was just about to lose sight of them, he had the exquisite satisfaction to see the party halt, and the pirate leave them, after a space just long enough for a civil farewell, and proceed slowly back, on his return to the beach. Blessing the Great Being who had thus relieved him from the most agonising fears which a father can feel, the worthy Udaller, from that instant, stood resigned to his own fate, whatever that might be.

CHAPTER XXXVII

Over the mountains and under the waves,
Over the fountains and under the graves,
Over floods that are deepest,
Which Neptune obey,
Over rocks that are steepest,
Love will find out the way.

Old Song.

THE parting of Fletcher from Claud Halcro and the sisters of Burgh-Westra, on the spot where it took place, was partly occasioned by a small party of armed men being seen at a distance in the act of advancing from Kirkwall, an apparition hidden from the Udaller's spy-glass by the swell of the ground, but quite visible to the pirate, whom it determined to consult his own safety by a speedy return to his boat. He was just turning away, when Minna occasioned the short delay which her father had observed.

'Stop,' she said, 'I command you! Tell your leader from me that, whatever the answer may be from Kirkwall, he shall carry his vessel, nevertheless, round to Stromness; and, being anchored there, let him send a boat ashore for Captain Cleveland when he shall see a smoke on the Bridge of Broisgar.'

Fletcher had thought, like his messmate Bunce, of asking a kiss, at least, for the trouble of escorting these beautiful young women; and, perhaps, neither the terror of the approaching Kirkwall men nor of Minna's weapon might have prevented his being insolent. But the name of his captain, and, still more, the unappalled, dignified, and commanding manner of Minna Troil, overawed him. He made a sea bow, promised to keep a sharp look-out, and, returning to his boat, went on board with his message.

As Halcro and the sisters advanced towards the party whom they saw on the Kirkwall road, and who, on their part, had halted as if to observe them, Brenda, relieved from the fears

of Fletcher's presence, which had hitherto kept her silent, exclaimed, 'Merciful Heaven! Minna, in what hands have we left our dear father?'

'In the hands of brave men,' said Minna, steadily. 'I fear not for him.'

'As brave as you please,' said Claud Halcro, 'but very dangerous rogues for all that. I know that fellow Altamont, as he calls himself, though that is not his right name neither — as deboshed a dog as ever made a barn ring with blood and blank verse. He began with *Barnwell*, and everybody thought he would end with the gallows, like the last scene in *Venice Preserved*.'

'It matters not,' said Minna — 'the wilder the waves, the more powerful is the voice that rules them. The name alone of Cleveland ruled the mood of the fiercest amongst them.'

'I am sorry for Cleveland,' said Brenda, 'if such are his companions; but I care little for him in comparison to my father.'

'Reserve your compassion for those who need it,' said Minna, 'and fear nothing for our father. God knows, every silver hair on his head is to me worth the treasure of an unsunned mine; but I know that he is safe while in yonder vessel, and I know that he will be soon safe on shore.'

'I would I could see it,' said Claud Halcro; 'but I fear the Kirkwall people, supposing Cleveland to be such as I dread, will not dare to exchange him against the Udaller. The Scots have very severe laws against theft-boot, as they call it.'

'But who are those on the road before us?' said Brenda; 'and why do they halt there so jealously?'

'They are a patrol of the militia,' answered Halcro. 'Glorious John touches them off a little sharply; but then John was a Jacobite, —

Mouths without hands, maintain'd at vast expense,
In peace a charge, in war a weak defence;
Stout once a-month, they march, a blustering band,
And ever, but in time of need, at hand.

I fancy they halted just now, taking us, as they saw us on the brow of the hill, for a party of the sloop's men; and now they can distinguish that you wear petticoats, they are moving on again.'

They came on accordingly, and proved to be, as Claud Halcro had suggested, a patrol sent out to watch the motions

of the pirates, and to prevent their attempting descents to damage the country.

They heartily congratulated Claud Halero, who was well known to more than one of them, upon his escape from captivity: and the commander of the party, while offering every assistance to the ladies, could not help condoling with them on the circumstances in which their father stood, hinting, though in a delicate and doubtful manner, the difficulties which might be in the way of his liberation.

When they arrived at Kirkwall, and obtained an audience of the provost and one or two of the magistrates, these difficulties were more plainly insisted upon. 'The "*Halcyon*" frigate is upon the coast,' said the provost: 'she was seen off *Duncansbay Head*; and, though I have the deepest respect for Mr. Troil of *Burgh-Westra*, yet I shall be answerable to law if I release from prison the captain of this suspicious vessel, on account of the safety of any individual who may be unhappily endangered by his detention. This man is now known to be the heart and soul of these buccaniers, and am I at liberty to send him abroad, that he may plunder the country, or perhaps go fight the king's ship? for he has impudence enough for anything.'

'*Courage* enough for anything, you mean, Mr. Provost,' said Minna, unable to restrain her displeasure.

'Why, you may call it as you please, Miss Troil,' said the worthy magistrate; 'but, in my opinion, that sort of courage which proposes to fight singly against two is little better than a kind of practical impudence.'

'But our father?' said Brenda, in a tone of the most earnest entreaty — 'our father — the friend, I may say the father, of his country — to whom so many look for kindness, and so many for actual support — whose loss would be the extinction of a beacon in a storm — will you indeed weigh the risk which he runs against such a trifling thing as letting an unfortunate man from prison, to seek his unhappy fate elsewhere?'

'Miss Brenda is right,' said Claud Halero; 'I am for let-a-be for let-a-be, as the boys say; and never fash about a warrant of liberation, provost, but just take a fool's counsel, and let the goodman of the jail forget to draw his bolt on the wicket, or leave a chink of a window open, or the like, and we shall be rid of the rover, and have the one best honest fellow in *Orkney* or *Zetland* on the lee-side of a bowl of punch with us in five hours.'

The provost replied in nearly the same terms as before, that he had the highest respect for Mr. Magnus Troil of *Burgh-*

Westra, but that he could not suffer his consideration for any individual, however respectable, to interfere with the discharge of his duty.

Minna then addressed her sister in a tone of calm and sarcastic displeasure. 'You forget,' she said, 'Brenda, that you are talking of the safety of a poor insignificant udaller of Zetland to no less a person than the chief magistrate of the metropolis of Orkney — can you expect so great a person to condescend to such a trifling subject of consideration? It will be time enough for the provost to think of complying with the terms sent to him — for comply with them at length he both must and will — when the church of St. Magnus is beat down about his ears.'

'You may be angry with me, my pretty young lady,' said the good-humoured Provost Torfe, 'but I cannot be offended with you. The church of St. Magnus has stood many a day, and, I think, will outlive both you and me, much more yonder pack of unchanged dogs. And besides that your father is half an Orkneyman, and has both estate and friends among us, I would, I give you my word, do as much for a Zetlander in distress as I would for any one, excepting one of our own native Kirkwallers, who are doubtless to be preferred. And if you will take up your lodgings here with my wife and myself, we will endeavour to show you,' continued he, 'that you are as welcome in Kirkwall as ever you could be in Lerwick or Scalloway.'

Minna deigned no reply to this good-humoured invitation; but Brenda declined it in civil terms, pleading the necessity of taking up their abode with a wealthy widow of Kirkwall, a relation, who already expected them.

Halero made another attempt to move the provost, but found him inexorable. 'The collector of the customs had already threatened,' he said, 'to inform against him for entering into treaty, or, as he called it, packing and peeling, with those strangers, even when it seemed the only means of preventing a bloody affray in the town; and, should he now forego the advantage afforded by the imprisonment of Cleveland and the escape of the factor, he might incur something worse than censure.' The burden of the whole was, 'That he was sorry for the Udaller, he was sorry even for the lad Cleveland, who had some sparks of honour about him; but his duty was imperious, and must be obeyed.' The provost then precluded farther argument by observing that another affair from Zetland called for his immediate attention. A gentleman named Mertoun,

residing at Jarlishof, had made complaint against Snailsfoot, the jagger, for having assisted a domestic of his in embezzling some valuable articles which had been deposited in his custody, and he was about to take examination on the subject, and cause them to be restored to Mr. Mertoun, who was accountable for them to the right owner.

In all this information there was nothing which seemed interesting to the sisters excepting the word 'Mertoun,' which went like a dagger to the heart of Minna, when she recollected the circumstances under which Mordaunt Mertoun had disappeared, and which, with an emotion less painful, though still of a melancholy nature, called a faint blush into Brenda's cheek, and a slight degree of moisture into her eye. But it was soon evident that the magistrate spoke not of Mordaunt, but of his father; and the daughters of Magnus, little interested in his detail, took leave of the provost to go to their own lodgings.

When they arrived at their relation's, Minna made it her business to learn, by such inquiries as she could make without exciting suspicion, what was the situation of the unfortunate Cleveland, which she soon discovered to be exceedingly precarious. The provost had not, indeed, committed him to close custody, as Claude Halero had anticipated, recollecting, perhaps, the favourable circumstances under which he had surrendered himself, and loth, till the moment of the last necessity, altogether to break faith with him. But although left apparently at large, he was strictly watched by persons well armed and appointed for the purpose, who had directions to detain him by force, if he attempted to pass certain narrow precincts which were allotted to him. He was quartered in a strong room within what is called the King's Castle, and at night his chamber door was locked on the outside, and a sufficient guard mounted to prevent his escape. He therefore enjoyed only the degree of liberty which the cat, in her cruel sport, is sometimes pleased to permit to the mouse which she has clutched; and yet, such was the terror of the resources, the courage, and ferocity of the pirate captain, that the provost was blamed by the collector and many other sage citizens of Kirkwall for permitting him to be at large upon any conditions.

It may be well believed that, under such circumstances, Cleveland had no desire to seek any place of public resort, conscious that he was the object of a mixed feeling of curiosity and terror. His favourite place of exercise, therefore, was the ex-

ternal aisles of the cathedral of St. Magnus, of which the eastern end alone is fitted up for public worship. This solemn old edifice, having escaped the ravage which attended the first convulsions of the Reformation, still retains some appearance of Episcopal dignity. This place of worship is separated by a screen from the nave and western limb of the cross, and the whole is preserved in a state of cleanliness and decency which might be well proposed as an example to the proud piles of Westminster and St. Paul's.

It was in this exterior part of the cathedral that Cleveland was permitted to walk, the rather that his guards, by watching the single open entrance, had the means, with very little inconvenience to themselves, of preventing any possible attempt at escape. The place itself was well suited to his melancholy circumstances. The lofty and vaulted roof rises upon ranges of Saxon pillars, of massive size, four of which, still larger than the rest, once supported the lofty spire, which, long since destroyed by accident, has been rebuilt upon a disproportioned and truncated plan. The light is admitted at the eastern end through a lofty, well-proportioned, and richly-ornamented Gothic window; and the pavement is covered with inscriptions, in different languages, distinguishing the graves of noble Orcadians, who have at different times been deposited within the sacred precincts.

Here walked Cleveland, musing over the events of a mis-spent life, which, it seemed probable, might be brought to a violent and shameful close, while he was yet in the prime of youth. 'With these dead,' he said, looking on the pavement, 'shall I soon be numbered; but no holy man will speak a blessing, no friendly hand register an inscription, no proud descendant sculpture armorial bearings, over the grave of the pirate Cleveland. My whitening bones will swing in the gibbet irons, on some wild beach or lonely cape, that will be esteemed fatal and accursed for my sake. The old mariner, as he passes the sound, will shake his head, and tell of my name and actions, as a warning to his younger comrades. But, Minna! — Minna! what will be thy thoughts when the news reaches thee? Would to God the tidings were drowned in the deepest whirlpool betwixt Kirkwall and Burgh-Westra, ere they came to her ear! and oh! would to Heaven that we had never met, since we never can meet again!'

He lifted up his eyes as he spoke, and Minna Troil stood before him. Her face was pale, and her hair dishevelled; but

her look was composed and firm, with its usual expression of high-minded melancholy. She was still shrouded in the large mantle which she had assumed on leaving the vessel. Cleveland's first emotion was astonishment; his next was joy, not unmingled with awe. He would have exclaimed — he would have thrown himself at her feet; but she imposed at once silence and composure on him by raising her finger and saying, in a low but commanding accent — 'Be cautious — we are observed; there are men without — they let me enter with difficulty. I dare not remain long; they would think — they might believe — Oh, Cleveland! I have hazarded everything to save you!'

'To save me? Alas! poor Minna!' answered Cleveland, 'to save me is impossible. Enough that I have seen you once more, were it but to say, "For ever farewell!"'

'We must indeed say farewell,' said Minna; 'for fate, and your guilt, have divided us for ever. Cleveland, I have seen your associates; need I tell you more — need I say, that I know now what a pirate is?'

'You have been in the ruffians' power!' said Cleveland, with a start of agony. 'Did they presume —'

'Cleveland,' replied Minna, 'they presumed nothing: your name was a spell over them. By the power of that spell over these ferocious banditti, and by that alone, I was reminded of the qualities I once thought my Cleveland's!'

'Yes,' said Cleveland, proudly, 'my name has and shall have power over them, when they are at the wildest; and, had they harmed you by one rude word, they should have found — Yet what do I rave about? I am a prisoner!'

'You shall be so no longer,' said Minna. 'Your safety — the safety of my dear father — all demand your instant freedom. I have formed a scheme for your liberty, which, boldly executed, cannot fail. The light is fading without; muffle yourself in my cloak, and you will easily pass the guards. I have given them the means of carousing, and they are deeply engaged. Haste to the Loch of Stennis, and hide yourself till day dawns; then make a smoke on the point, where the land, stretching into the lake on each side, divides it nearly in two at the Bridge of Broisgar. Your vessel, which lies not far distant, will send a boat ashore. Do not hesitate an instant!'

'But you, Minna! Should this wild scheme succeed,' said Cleveland, 'what is to become of you?'

'For my share in your escape,' answered the maiden, 'the honesty of my own intention will vindicate me in the sight of

Heaven; and the safety of my father, whose fate depends on yours, will be my excuse to man.

In a few words, she gave him the history of their capture, and its consequences. Cleveland cast up his eyes and raised his hands to Heaven, in thankfulness for the escape of the sisters from his evil companions, and then hastily added — 'But you are right, Minna: I must fly at all rates -- for your father's sake I must fly. Here, then, we part -- yet not, I trust, for ever.'

'For ever!' answered a voice, that sounded as from a sepulchral vault.

They started, looked around them, and then gazed on each other. It seemed as if the echoes of the building had returned Cleveland's last words, but the pronunciation was too emphatically accented.

'Yes, for ever!' said Norna of the Fitful Head, stepping forward from behind one of the massive Saxon pillars which support the roof of the cathedral. 'Here meet the crimson foot and the crimson hand. Well for both that the wound is healed whence that crimson was derived -- well for both, but best for him who shed it. Here, then, you meet, and meet for the last time!'

'Not so,' said Cleveland, as if about to take Minna's hand; 'to separate me from Minna, while I have life, must be the work of herself alone.'

'Away!' said Norna, stepping betwixt them -- 'away with such idle folly! Nourish no vain dreams of future meetings: you part here, and you part for ever. The hawk pairs not with the dove; guilt matches not with innocence. Minna Troil, you look for the last time on this bold and criminal man. Cleveland, you behold Minna for the last time!'

'And dream you,' said Cleveland, indignantly, 'that your mummery imposes on me, and that I am among the fools that see more than trick in your pretended art?'

'Forbear, Cleveland -- forbear!' said Minna, her hereditary awe of Norna augmented by the circumstance of her sudden appearance. 'Oh, forbear! she is powerful -- she is but too powerful. And do you, O Norna, remember my father's safety is linked with Cleveland's.'

'And it is well for Cleveland that I do remember it,' replied the pythoness; 'and that, for the sake of one, I am here to aid both. You, with your childish purpose of passing one of his bulk and stature under the disguise of a few paltry folds of wadmaal -- what would your device have procured him but in-

stant restraint with bolt and shackle? I will save him — I will place him in security on board his bark. But let him renounce these shores for ever, and carry elsewhere the terrors of his sable flag and his yet blacker name; for if the sun rises twice and finds him still at anchor, his blood be on his own head. Ay, look to each other — look the last look that I permit to frail affection, and say, if you *can* say it, "Farewell for ever!"

'Obey her,' stammered Minna — 'remonstrate not, but obey her.'

Cleveland, grasping her hand and kissing it ardent'y, said, but so low that she only could hear it, 'Farewell, Minna, but *not* for ever.'

'And now, maiden, begone,' said Norna, 'and leave the rest to the Reim-kennar.'

'One word more,' said Minna, 'and I obey you. Tell me but if I have caught aright your meaning. Is Mordaunt Mertoun safe and recovered?'

'Recovered, and safe,' said Norna; 'else woe to the hand that shed his blood!'

Minna slowly sought the door of the cathedral, and turned back from time to time to look at the shadowy form of Norna, and the stately and military figure of Cleveland, as they stood together in the deepening gloom of the ancient cathedral. When she looked back a second time they were in motion, and Cleveland followed the matron as, with a slow and solemn step, she glided towards one of the side aisles. When Minna looked back a third time, their figures were no longer visible. She collected herself, and walked on to the eastern door by which she had entered, and listened for an instant to the guard, who talked together on the outside.

'The Zetland girl stays a long time with this pirate fellow,' said one. 'I wish they have not more to speak about than the ransom of her father.'

'Ay, truly,' answered another, 'the wenches will have more sympathy with a handsome young pirate than an old bed-ridden burgher.'

Their discourse was here interrupted by her of whom they were speaking; and, as if taken in the manner, they pulled off their hats, made their awkward obeisances, and looked not a little embarrassed and confused.

Minna returned to the house where she lodged, much affected, yet, on the whole, pleased with the result of her expedition, which seemed to put her father out of danger, and assured her at once

of the escape of Cleveland and of the safety of young Mordaunt. She hastened to communicate both pieces of intelligence to Brenda, who joined her in thankfulness to Heaven, and was herself wellnigh persuaded to believe in Norma's supernatural pretensions, so much was she pleased with the manner in which they had been employed. Some time was spent in exchanging their mutual congratulations, and mingling tears of hope, mixed with apprehension, when, at a late hour in the evening, they were interrupted by Claud Halero, who, full of a fidgeting sort of importance, not unmingled with fear, came to acquaint them that the prisoner, Cleveland, had disappeared from the cathedral, in which he had been permitted to walk, and that the provost, having been informed that Minna was accessory to his flight, was coming, in a mighty quandary, to make inquiry into the circumstances.

When the worthy magistrate arrived, Minna did not conceal from him her own wish that Cleveland should make his escape, as the only means which she saw of redeeming her father from imminent danger. But that she had any actual accession to his flight, she positively denied; and stated, 'That she had parted from Cleveland in the cathedral, more than two hours since, and then left him in company with a third person, whose name she did not conceive herself obliged to communicate.'

'It is not needful, Miss Minna Troil,' answered Provost Torfe; 'for, although no person but this Captain Cleveland and yourself was seen to enter the kirk of St. Magnus this day, we know well enough your cousin, old Ulla Troil, whom you Zetlanders call Norna of Fitful Head, has been cruising up and down, upon sea and land, and air, for what I know, in boats and on ponies, and it may be on broomsticks; and here has been her dumb Drow, too, coming and going, and playing the spy on every one; and a good spy he is, for he can hear everything, and tells nothing again, unless to his mistress. And we know, besides, that she can enter the kirk when all the doors are fast, and has been seen there more than once, God save us from the Evil One! and so, without farther questions asked, I conclude it was old Norna whom you left in the kirk with this slashing blade; and if so, they may catch them again that can. I cannot but say, however, pretty Mistress Minna, that you Zetland folks seem to forget both law and Gospel, when you use the help of witchcraft to fetch delinquents out of a legal prison; and the least that you, or your cousin, or your father, can do, is to use influence with this wild fellow to go away as soon as possible,

without hurting the town or trade, and then there will be little harm in what has chanced; for, Heaven knows, I did not seek the poor lad's life, so I could get my hands free of him without blame; and far less did I wish that, through his imprisonment, any harm should come to worthy Magnus Troil of Burgh-Westra.

'I see then the shoe pinches you, Mr. Provost,' said Claud Halero, 'and I am sure I can answer for my friend Mr. Troil, as well as for myself, that we will say and do all in our power with this man, Captain Cleveland, to make him leave the coast directly.'

'And I,' said Minna, 'am so convinced that what you recommend is the best, that my sister and I will set off early to-morrow morning to the House of Stennis, if Mr. Halero will give us his good offices to receive my father when he comes ashore, that we may acquaint him with your wish, and to use every influence to induce this unhappy man to leave the country.'

Provost Torfe looked upon her with some surprise. 'It is not every young woman,' he said, 'would wish to move eight miles nearer to a band of pirates.'

'We run no risk,' said Claud Halero, interfering. 'The House of Stennis is strong; and my cousin, whom it belongs to, has men and arms within it. The young ladies are as safe there as in Kirkwall; and much good may arise from an early communication between Magnus Troil and his daughters. And happy am I to see that, in your case, my good old friend, as glorious John says —

After much debate,
The man prevails above the magistrate.'

The provost smiled, nodded his head, and indicated, as far as he thought he could do with decency, how happy he should be if the 'Fortune's Favourite' and her disorderly crew would leave Orkney without further interference or violence on either side. He could not authorise their being supplied from the shore, he said; but, either for fear or favour, they were certain to get provisions at Stromness. This pacific magistrate then took leave of Halero and the two ladies, who proposed the next morning to transfer their residence to the House of Stennis, situated upon the banks of the salt-water lake of the same name, and about four miles by water from the Road of Stromness, where the rover's vessel was lying.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

Fly, Fleance, fly ! Thou mayest escape.
Macbeth.

IT was one branch of the various arts by which Norna endeavoured to maintain her pretensions to supernatural powers, that she made herself familiarly and practically acquainted with all the secret passes and recesses, whether natural or artificial, which she could hear of, whether by tradition or otherwise, and was, by such knowledge, often enabled to perform feats which were otherwise unaccountable. Thus, when she escaped from the tabernacle at Burgh-Westra, it was by a sliding board which covered a secret passage in the wall, known to none but herself and Magnus, who, she was well assured, would not betray her. The profusion, also, with which she lavished a considerable income, otherwise of no use to her, enabled her to procure the earliest intelligence respecting whatever she desired to know, and, at the same time, to secure all other assistance necessary to carry her plans into effect. Cleveland, upon the present occasion, had reason to admire both her sagacity and her resources.

Upon her applying a little forcible pressure, a door, which was concealed under some rich wooden sculpture of the screen which divides the eastern aisle from the rest of the cathedral, opened, and disclosed a dark, narrow, winding passage, into which she entered, telling Cleveland, in a whisper, to follow, and be sure he shut the door behind him. He obeyed, and followed her in darkness and silence, sometimes descending steps, of the number of which she always apprised him, sometimes ascending, and often turning at short angles. The air was more free than he could have expected, the passage being ventilated at different parts by unseen and ingeniously contrived spiracles, which communicated with the open air. At length their long course ended by Norna drawing aside a sliding panel which, opening

behind a wooden, or box-bed, as it is called in Scotland, admitted them into an ancient, but very mean, apartment, having a latticed window and a groined roof. The furniture was much dilapidated; and its only ornaments were, on the one side of the wall, a garland of faded ribbons, such as are used to decorate whale-vessels; and, on the other, an escutcheon, bearing an earl's arms and coronet, surrounded with the usual emblems of mortality. The mattock and spade, which lay in one corner, together with the appearance of an old man, who, in a rusty black coat and slouched hat, sat reading by a table, announced that they were in the habitation of the church beadle, or sexton, and in the presence of that respectable functionary.

When his attention was attracted by the noise of the sliding panel, he arose, and, testifying much respect, but no surprise, took his shadowy hat from his thin grey locks, and stood uncovered in the presence of Norna with an air of profound humility.

'Be faithful,' said Norna to the old man, 'and beware you show not any living mortal the secret path to the sanctuary.'

The old man bowed, in token of obedience and of thanks, for she put money in his hand as she spoke. With a faltering voice, he expressed his hope that she would remember his son, who was on the Greenland voyage, that he might return fortunate and safe, as he had done last year, when he brought back the garland, pointing to that upon the wall.

'My cauldron shall boil, and my rhyme shall be said, in his behalf,' answered Norna. 'Waits Pacolet without with the horses?'

The old sexton assented, and the pythoness, commanding Cleveland to follow her, went through a back door of the apartment into a small garden, corresponding, in its desolate appearance, to the habitation they had just quitted. The low and broken wall easily permitted them to pass into another and larger garden, though not much better kept, and a gate, which was upon the latch, let them into a long and winding lane, through which, Norna having whispered to her companion that it was the only dangerous place on their road, they walked with a hasty pace. It was now nearly dark, and the inhabitants of the poor dwellings on either hand had betaken themselves to their houses. They saw only one woman, who was looking from her door, but blessed herself, and retired into her house with precipitation, when she saw the tall figure of Norna stalk past her with long strides. The lane conducted

them into the country, where the dumb dwarf waited with three horses, ensconced behind the wall of a deserted shed. On one of these Norna instantly seated herself, Cleveland mounted another, and, followed by Pacolet on the third, they moved sharply on through the darkness; the active and spirited animals on which they rode being of a breed rather taller than those reared in Zetland.

After more than an hour's smart riding, in which Norna acted as guide, they stopped before a hovel, so utterly desolate in appearance that it resembled rather a cattle-shed than a cottage.

'Here you must remain till dawn, when your signal can be seen from your vessel,' said Norna, consigning the horses to the care of Pacolet, and leading the way into the wretched hovel, which she presently illuminated by lighting the small iron lamp which she usually carried along with her. 'It is a poor,' she said, 'but a safe, place of refuge; for, were we pursued hither, the earth would yawn and admit us into its recesses ere you were taken. For know, that this ground is sacred to the gods of old Valhalla. And now say, man of mischief and of blood, are you friend or foe to Norna, the sole priestess of these disowned deities?'

'How is it possible for me to be your enemy?' said Cleveland. 'Common gratitude——'

'Common gratitude,' said Norna, interrupting him, 'is a common word; and words are the common pay which fools accept at the hands of knaves; but Norna must be requited by actions — by sacrifices.'

'Well, mother, name your request.'

'That you never seek to see Minna Troil again, and that you leave this coast in twenty-four hours,' answered Norna.

'It is impossible,' said the captain: 'I cannot be soon enough found in the sea-stores which the sloop must have.'

'You can. I will take care you are fully supplied; and Caithness and the Hebrides are not far distant — you can depart if you will.'

'And why should I,' said Cleveland, 'if I will not?'

'Because your stay endangers others,' said Norna, 'and will prove your own destruction. Hear me with attention. From the first moment I saw you lying senseless on the sand beneath the cliffs of Sumburgh, I read that in your countenance which linked you with me, and those who were dear to me; but whether for good or evil, was hidden from mine eyes. I aided

in saving your life, in preserving your property. I aided in doing so the very youth whom you have crossed in his dearest affections — crossed by tale-bearing and slander.'

'I slander Mertoun!' exclaimed the captain. 'By Heaven, I scarce mentioned his name at Burgh-Westra, if it is that which you mean. The peddling fellow Bryce, meaning, I believe, to be my friend, because he found something could be made by me, did, I have since heard, carry tattle, or truth, I know not which, to the old man, which was confirmed by the report of the whole island. But for me, I scarce thought of him as a rival; else I had taken a more honourable way to rid myself of him.'

'Was the point of your double-edged knife, directed to the bosom of an unarmed man, intended to carve out that more honourable way?' said Norna, sternly.

Cleveland was conscience-struck, and remained silent for an instant, ere he replied, 'There, indeed, I was wrong; but he is, I thank Heaven, recovered, and welcome to an honourable satisfaction.'

'Cleveland,' said the pythoness, 'no! The fiend who employs you as his implement is powerful; but with me he shall not strive. You are of that temperament which the dark Influences desire as the tools of their agency — bold, haughty, and undaunted, unrestrained by principle, and having only in its room a wild sense of indomitable pride, which such men call honour. Such you are, and as such your course through life has been — onward and unrestrained, bloody and tempestuous. By me, however, it shall be controlled,' she concluded, stretching out her staff, as if in the attitude of determined authority — 'ay, even although the demon who presides over it should now arise in his terrors.'

Cleveland laughed scornfully. 'Good mother,' he said, 'reserve such language for the rude sailor that implores you to bestow on him fair wind, or the poor fisherman that asks success to his nets and lines. I have been long inaccessible both to fear and to superstition. Call forth your demon, if you command one, and place him before me. The man that has spent years in company with incarnate devils can scarce dread the presence of a disembodied fiend.'

This was said with a careless and desperate bitterness of spirit which proved too powerfully energetic even for the delusions of Norna's insanity; and it was with a hollow and tremulous voice that she asked Cleveland — 'For what, then,

do you hold me, if you deny the power that I have bought so dearly ?'

'You have wisdom, mother,' said Cleveland ; 'at least you have art, and art is power. I hold you for one who knows how to steer upon the current of events, but I deny your power to change its course. Do not, therefore, waste words in quoting terrors for which I have no feeling, but tell me at once, wherefore you would have me depart ?'

'Because I will have you see Minna no more,' answered Norna. 'Because Minna is the destined bride of him whom men call Mordaunt Mertoun. Because, if you depart not within twenty-four hours, utter destruction awaits you. In these plain words there is no metaphysical delusion. Answer me as plainly.'

'In as plain words, then,' answered Cleveland, 'I will *not* leave these islands — not, at least, till I have seen Minna Troil ; and never shall your Mordaunt possess her while I live.'

'Hear him !' said Norna — 'hear a mortal man spurn at the means of prolonging his life ! Hear a sinful — a most sinful being, refuse the time which fate yet affords for repentance, and for the salvation of an immortal soul ! Behold him how he stands erect, bold and confident in his youthful strength and courage ! My eyes, unused to tears — even my eyes, which have so little cause to weep for him, are blinded with sorrow, to think what so fair a form will be ere the second sun set !'

'Mother,' said Cleveland, firmly, yet with some touch of sorrow in his voice, 'I in part understand your threats. You know more than we do of the course of the "*Halcyon*," perhaps have the means — for I acknowledge you have shown wonderful skill of combination in such affairs — of directing her cruise our way. Be it so, I will not depart from my purpose for that risk. If the frigate comes hither, we have still our shoal water to trust to ; and I think they will scarce cut us out with boats, as if we were a Spanish xebek. I am therefore resolved I will hoist once more the flag under which I have cruised, avail ourselves of the thousand chances which have helped us in greater odds, and, at the worst, fight the vessel to the very last ; and, when mortal man can do no more, it is but snapping a pistol in the powder-room, and, as we have lived, so will we die.'

There was a dead pause as Cleveland ended ; and it was broken by his resuming, in a softer tone — 'You have heard my answer, mother ; let us debate it no further, but part in peace. I would willingly leave you a remembrance, that you may not

forget a poor fellow to whom your services have been useful, and who parts with you in no unkindness, however unfriendly you are to his dearest interests. Nay, do not shun to accept such a trifle,' he said, forcing upon Norna the little silver enchased box which had been once the subject of strife betwixt Mertoun and him; 'it is not for the sake of the metal, which I know you value not, but simply as a memorial that you have met him of whom many a strange tale will hereafter be told in the seas which he has traversed.'

'I accept your gift,' said Norna, 'in token that, if I have in aught been accessary to your fate, it was as the involuntary and grieving agent of other powers. Well did you say we direct not the current of the events which hurry us forward, and render our utmost efforts unavailing; even as the wells¹ of Tuftiloe can wheel the stoutest vessel round and round in despite of either sail or steerage. Pacolet!' she exclaimed in a louder voice — 'what, ho! Pacolet!'

A large stone, which lay at the side of the wall of the hovel, fell as she spoke, and to Cleveland's surprise, if not somewhat to his fear, the misshapen form of the dwarf was seen, like some overgrown reptile, extricating himself out of a subterranean passage, the entrance to which the stone had covered.

Norna, as if impressed by what Cleveland had said on the subject of her supernatural pretensions, was so far from endeavouring to avail herself of this opportunity to enforce them, that she hastened to explain the phenomenon he had witnessed.

'Such passages,' she said, 'to which the entrances are carefully concealed, are frequently found in these islands — the places of retreat of the ancient inhabitants, where they sought refuge from the rage of the Normans, the pirates of that day. It was that you might avail yourself of this, in case of need, that I brought you hither. Should you observe signs of pursuit, you may either lurk in the bowels of the earth until it has passed by, or escape, if you will, through the farther entrance near the lake, by which Pacolet entered but now. And now farewell! Think on what I have said; for as sure as you now move and breathe a living man, so surely is your doom fixed and sealed, unless, within four-and-twenty hours, you have doubled the Burgh Head.'

'Farewell, mother!' said Cleveland, as she departed, bending a look upon him, in which, as he could perceive by the lamp, sorrow was mingled with displeasure.

¹ See Wells and Waves. Note 45.

The interview, which thus concluded, left a strong effect even upon the mind of Cleveland, accustomed as he was to imminent dangers and to hair-breadth escapes. He in vain attempted to shake off the impression left by the words of Norna, which he felt the more powerful, because they were in a great measure divested of her wonted mystical tone, which he contemned. A thousand times he regretted that he had from time to time delayed the resolution, which he had long adopted, to quit his dreadful and dangerous trade; and as often he firmly determined that, could he but see Minna Troil once more, were it but for a last farewell, he would leave the sloop as soon as his comrades were extricated from their perilous situation, endeavour to obtain the benefit of the king's pardon, and distinguish himself, if possible, in some more honourable course of warfare.

This resolution, to which he again and again pledged himself, had at length a sedative effect on his mental perturbation, and, wrapt in his cloak, he enjoyed, for a time, that imperfect repose which exhausted nature demands as her tribute, even from those who are situated on the verge of the most imminent danger. But, how far soever the guilty may satisfy his own mind and stupify the feelings of remorse by such a conditional repentance, we may well question whether it is not, in the sight of Heaven, rather a presumptuous aggravation than an expiation of his sins.

When Cleveland awoke, the grey dawn was already mingling with the twilight of an Orcadian night. He found himself on the verge of a beautiful sheet of water, which, close by the place where he had rested, was nearly divided by two tongues of land that approach each other from the opposing sides of the lake, and are in some degree united by the Bridge of Broisgar, a long causeway, containing openings to permit the flow and reflux of the tide. Behind him, and fronting to the bridge, stood that remarkable semicircle of huge upright stones which has no rival in Britain, excepting the inimitable monument at Stonehenge. These immense blocks of stone, all of them above twelve feet, and several being even fourteen or fifteen feet in height, stood around the pirate in the grey light of the dawning like the phantom forms of antediluvian giants, who, shrouded in the habiliments of the dead, came to revisit, by this pale light, the earth which they had plagued by their oppression and polluted by their sins, till they brought down upon it the vengeance of long-suffering Heaven.¹

¹ See The Standing Stones of Stennis. Note 46.

Cleveland was less interested by this singular monument of antiquity than by the distant view of Stromness, which he could as yet scarce discover. He lost no time in striking a light, by the assistance of one of his pistols, and some wet fern supplied him with fuel sufficient to make the appointed signal. It had been earnestly watched for on board the sloop; for Goffe's incapacity became daily more apparent; and even his most steady adherents agreed that it would be best to submit to Cleveland's command till they got back to the West Indies.

Bunce, who came with the boat to bring off his favourite commander, danced, cursed, shouted, and spouted for joy when he saw him once more at freedom. 'They had already,' he said, 'made some progress in victualling the sloop, and they might have made more but for that drunken old swab Goffe, who minded nothing but splicing the main-brace.'

The boat's crew were inspired with the same enthusiasm, and rowed so hard that, although the tide was against them, and the air of wind failed, they soon placed Cleveland once more on the quarter-deck of the vessel which it was his misfortune to command.

The first exercise of the captain's power was to make known to Magnus Troil that he was at full freedom to depart; that he was willing to make him any compensation in his power for the interruption of his voyage to Kirkwall; and that Captain Cleveland was desirous, if agreeable to Mr. Troil, to pay his respects to him on board his brig, thank him for former favours, and apologise for the circumstances attending his detention.

To Bunce, who, as the most civilised of the crew, Cleveland had entrusted this message, the old plain-dealing Udaller made the following answer: 'Tell your captain that I should be glad to think he had never stopped any one upon the high sea save such as have suffered as little as I have. Say, too, that, if we are to continue friends, we shall be most so at a distance; for I like the sound of his cannon-balls as little by sea as he would like the whistle of a bullet by land from my rifle-gun. Say, in a word, that I am sorry I was mistaken in him, and that he would have done better to have reserved for the Spaniard the usage he is bestowing on his countrymen.'

'And so that is your message, old Snapcholerick?' said Bunce. 'Now, stap my vitals if I have not a mind to do your errand for you over the left shoulder, and teach you more respect for gentlemen of fortune! But I won't, and chiefly for

the sake of your two pretty wenches, not to mention my old friend Claud Halcro, the very visage of whom brought back all the old days of scene-shifting and candle-snuffing. So good morrow to you, Gaffer Seal's-cap, and all is said that need pass between us.'

No sooner did the boat put off with the pirates, who left the brig and now returned to their own vessel, than Magnus, in order to avoid reposing unnecessary confidence in the honour of these gentlemen of fortune, as they called themselves, got his brig under way; and, the wind coming favourably round, and increasing as the sun rose, he crowded all sail for Scalpa Flow, intending there to disembark and go by land to Kirkwall, where he expected to meet his daughters and his friend Claud Halcro.

CHAPTER XXXIX

Now, Emma, now the last reflection make,
What thou wouldst follow, what thou must forsake.
By our ill-omen'd stars and adverse Heaven,
No middle object to thy choice is given.

Henry and Emma.

THE sun was high in heaven; the boats were busily fetching off from the shore the promised supply of provisions and water, which, as many fishing skiffs were employed in the service, were got on board with unexpected speed, and stowed away by the crew of the sloop with equal despatch. All worked with good will; for all, save Cleveland himself, were weary of a coast where every moment increased their danger, and where, which they esteemed a worse misfortune, there was no booty to be won. Bunce and Derrick took the immediate direction of this duty, while Cleveland, walking the deck alone, and in silence, only interfered from time to time, to give some order which circumstances required, and then relapsed into his own sad reflections.

There are two sorts of men whom situations of guilt, and terror, and commotion bring forward as prominent agents. The first are spirits so naturally moulded and fitted for deeds of horror that they stalk forth from their lurking-places like actual demons, to work in their native element, as the hideous apparition of the Bearded Man came forth at Versailles, on the memorable 5th October 1789, the delighted executioner of the victims delivered up to him by a bloodthirsty rabble. But Cleveland belonged to the second class of these unfortunate beings, who are involved in evil rather by the concurrence of external circumstances than by natural inclination. Being, indeed, one in whom his first engaging in this lawless mode of life, as the follower of his father, nay, perhaps, even his pursuing it as his father's avenger, carried with it something of mitigation and apology; one also who often considered his

guilty situation with horror, and had made repeated, though ineffectual, efforts to escape from it.

Such thoughts of remorse were now rolling in his mind, and he may be forgiven if recollections of Minna mingled with and aided them. He looked around, too, on his mates, and, profligate and hardened as he knew them to be, he could not think of their paying the penalty of his obstinacy. 'We shall be ready to sail with the ebb tide,' he said to himself; 'why should I endanger these men by detaining them till the hour of danger predicted by that singular woman shall arrive? Her intelligence, howsoever acquired, has been always strangely accurate; and her warning was as solemn as if a mother were to apprise an erring son of his crimes and of his approaching punishment. Besides, what chance is there that I can again see Minna? She is at Kirkwall, doubtless, and to hold my course thither would be to steer right upon the rocks. No, I will not endanger these poor fellows: I will sail with the ebb tide. On the desolate Hebrides, or on the north-west coast of Ireland, I will leave the vessel and return hither in some disguise; yet, why should I return, since it will perhaps be only to see Minna the bride of Mordaunt? No; let the vessel sail with this ebb tide without me. I will abide and take my fate.'

His meditations were here interrupted by Jack Bunce, who, hailing him noble captain, said they were ready to sail when he pleased.

'When *you* please, Bunce; for I shall leave the command with you, and go ashore at Stromness,' said Cleveland.

'You shall do no such matter, by Heaven!' answered Bunce. 'The command with me, truly! and how the devil am I to get the crew to obey *me*? Why, even Dick Fletcher rides rusty on me now and then. You know well enough that, without you, we shall be all at each other's throats in half an hour; and, if you desert us, what a rope's end does it signify whether we are destroyed by the king's cruisers or by each other? Come—come, noble captain, there are black-eyed girls enough in the world, but where will you find so tight a sea-boat as the little "Favourite" here, manned as she is with a set of tearing lads,

Fit to disturb the peace of all the world,
And rule it when 't is wildest?'

'You are a precious fool, Jack Bunce,' said Cleveland, half-angry, and, in despite of himself, half-diverted, by the false tones and exaggerated gesture of the stage-struck pirate.

'It may be so, noble captain,' answered Bunce, 'and it may be that I have my comrades in my folly. Here are you, now, going to play *All for Love, and the World well Lost*, and yet you cannot bear a harmless bounce in blank verse. Well, I can talk prose for the matter, for I have news enough to tell -- and strange news, too -- ay, and stirring news to boot.'

'Well, prithee deliver them -- to speak thy own cant -- like a man of this world.'

'The Stromness fishers will accept nothing for their provisions and trouble,' said Bunce -- 'there is a wonder for you!'

'And for what reason, I pray?' said Cleveland; 'it is the first time I have ever heard of cash being refused at a seaport.'

'True! they commonly lay the charges on as thick as if they were caulking. But here is the matter. The owner of the brig yonder, the father of your fair Imoinda, stands paymaster, by way of thanks for the civility with which we treated his daughters, and that we may not meet our due, as he calls it, on these shores.'

'It is like the frank-hearted old Udaller!' said Cleveland. 'But is he then at Stromness? I thought he was to have crossed the island for Kirkwall.'

'He did so purpose,' said Bunce; 'but more folks than King Duncan change the course of their voyage. He was no sooner ashore than he was met with by a meddling old witch of these parts, who has her finger in every man's pie, and by her counsel he changed his purpose of going to Kirkwall, and lies at anchor for the present in yonder white house, that you may see with your glass up the lake yonder. I am told the old woman clubbed also to pay for the sloop's stores. Why she should shell out the boards I cannot conceive an idea, except that she is said to be a witch, and may befriend us as so many devils.'

'But who told you all this?' said Cleveland, without using his spy-glass, or seeming so much interested in the news as his comrade had expected.

'Why,' replied Bunce, 'I made a trip ashore this morning to the village, and had a can with an old acquaintance, who had been sent by Master Troil to look after matters, and I fished it all out of him, and more, too, than I am desirous of telling you, noble captain.'

'And who is your intelligencer?' said Cleveland; 'has he got no name?'

'Why, he is an old, fiddling, foppish acquaintance of mine called Halero, if you must know,' said Bunce.

'Halero!' echoed Cleveland, his eyes sparkling with surprise.
'Claud Halero? why, he went ashore at Inganess with Minna and her sister. Where are they?'

'Why, that is just what I did not want to tell you,' replied the confidant; 'yet hang me if I can help it, for I cannot baulk a fine situation. That start had a fine effect. Oh ay, and the spy-glass is turned on the House of Stennis *now*! Well, yonder they are, it mu t be confessed — indifferently well guarded, too. Some of the old witch's people are come over from that mountain of an island — Hoy, as they call it; and the old gentleman has got some fellows under arms himself. But what of all that, noble captain! give you but the word, and we snap up the wenches to-night — clap them under hatches — man the capstern by daybreak — up topsails — and sail with the morning tide.'

'You sicken me with your villany,' said Cleveland, turning away from him.

'Umph! villany, and sicken you!' said Bunce. 'Now, pray, what have I said but what has been done a thousand times by gentlemen of fortune like ourselves?'

'Mention it not again,' said Cleveland; then took a turn along the deck, in deep meditation, and, coming back to Bunce, took him by the hand, and said, 'Jack, I will see her once more.'

'With all my heart,' said Bunce, sullenly.

'Once more will I see her, and it may be to abjure at her feet this cursed trade, and expiate my offences —'

'At the gallows!' said Bunce, completing the sentence.

'With all my heart! confess and be hanged is a most reverend proverb.'

'Nay — but, dear Jack!' said Cleveland.

'Dear Jack!' answered Bunce, in the same sullen tone, 'a dear sight you have been to dear Jack. But hold your own course; I have done with caring for you for ever. I should but sicken you with my villanous counsels.'

'Now, must I soothe this silly fellow as if he were a spoiled child,' said Cleveland, speaking at Bunce, but not to him; 'and yet he has sense enough, and bravery enough, too; and, one would think, kindness enough to know that men don't pick their words during a gale of wind.'

'Why, that's true, Clement,' said Bunce, 'and there is my hand upon it. And, now I think upon't, you shall have your last interview, for it's out of my line to prevent a parting

scene ; and what signifies a tide ! We can sail by to-morrow's ebb as well as by this.'

Cleveland sighed, for Norna's prediction rushed on his mind ; but the opportunity of a last meeting with Minna was too tempting to be resigned either for presentiment or prediction.

'I will go presently ashore to the place where they all are,' said Bunce ; 'and the payment of these stores shall serve me for a pretext ; and I will carry any letters or message from you to Minna with the dexterity of a *valet-de-chambre*.'

'But they have armed men ; you may be in danger,' said Cleveland.

'Not a whit -- not a whit,' replied Bunce. 'I protected the wenches when they were in my power ; I warrant their father will neither wrong me nor see me wronged.'

'You say true,' said Cleveland, 'it is not in his nature. I will instantly write a note to Minna.' And he ran down to the cabin for that purpose, where he wasted much paper ere, with a trembling hand and throbbing heart, he achieved such a letter as he hoped might prevail on Minna to permit him a farewell meeting on the succeeding morning.

His adherent, Bunce, in the meanwhile, sought out Fletcher, of whose support to second any motion whatever he accounted himself perfectly sure ; and, followed by this trusty satellite, he intruded himself on the awful presence of Hawkins, the boatswain, and Derrick, the quarter-master, who were regaling themselves with a can of rumbo, after the fatiguing duty of the day.

'Here comes he can tell us,' said Derrick. 'So, Master Lieutenant, for so we must call you now, I think, let us have a peep into your counsels. When will the anchor be a-trip ?'

'When it pleases Heaven, Master Quarter-Master,' answered Bunce, 'for I know no more than the stern-post.'

'Why, d--n my buttons,' said Derrick, 'do we not weigh this tide ?'

'Or to-morrow's tide, at farthest ?' said the boatswain. 'Why, what have we been slaving the whole company for, to get all these stores aboard ?'

'Gentlemen,' said Bunce, 'you are to know that Cupid has laid our captain on board, carried the vessel, and nailed down his wits under hatches.'

'What sort of play-stuff is all this ?' said the boatswain, gruffly. 'If you have anything to tell us, say it in a word, like a man.'

'Howsomdever,' said Fletcher, 'I always think Jack Bunce speaks like a man, and acts like a man too; and so, d'ye see —'

'Hold your peace, dear Dick — best of bully-backs, be silent,' said Bunce. 'Gentlemen, in one word, the captain is in love.'

'Why, now, only think of that!' said the boatswain; 'not but that I have been in love as often as any man, when the ship was laid up.'

'Well, but,' continued Bunce, 'Captain Cleveland is in love. Yes — Prince Volscius is in love; and, though that's the cue for laughing on the stage, it is no laughing matter here. He expects to meet the girl to-morrow, for the last time; and that, we all know, leads to another meeting, and another, and so on till the "Halcyon" is down on us, and then we may look for more kicks than halfpence.'

'By —,' said the boatswain, with a sounding oath, 'we'll have a mutiny, and not allow him to go ashore — eh, Derrick?'

'And the best way too,' said Derrick.

'What d'ye think of it, Jack Bunce?' said Fletcher, in whose ears this counsel sounded very sagely, but who still bent a wistful look upon his companion.

'Why, look ye, gentlemen,' said Bunce, 'I will mutiny none, and stap my vitals if any of you shall!'

'Why, then I won't for one,' said Fletcher; 'but what are we to do, since howsomdever —'

'Stopper your jaw, Dick, will you?' said Bunce. 'Now, boatswain, I am partly of your mind, that the captain must be brought to reason by a little wholesome force. But you all know he has the spirit of a lion, and will do nothing unless he is allowed to hold on his own course. Well, I'll go ashore and make this appointment. The girl comes to the rendezvous in the morning, and the captain goes ashore; we take a good boat's crew with us, to row against tide and current, and we will be ready at the signal to jump ashore and bring off the captain and the girl, whether they will or no. The pet-child will not quarrel with us, since we bring off his whirligig along with him; and if he is still fractious, why, we will weigh anchor without his orders, and let him come to his senses at leisure, and know his friends another time.'

'Why, this has a face with it, Master Derrick,' said Hawkins.

'Jack Bunce is always right,' said Fletcher; 'howsomdever, the captain will shoot some of us, that is certain.'

'Hold your jaw, Dick,' said Bunce; 'pray, who the devil cares, do you think, whether you are shot or hanged?'

'Why, it don't much argufy for the matter of that,' replied Dick; 'howsomdever——'

'Be quiet, I tell you,' said his inexorable patron, 'and hear me out. We will take him at unawares, so that he shall neither have time to use cutlass nor pops; and I myself, for the dear love I bear him, will be the first to lay him on his back. There is a nice tight-going bit of a pinnace that is a consort of this chase of the captain's; if I have an opportunity, I'll snap her up on my own account.'

'Yes—yes,' said Derrick, 'let you alone for keeping on the look-out for your own comforts.'

'Faith, nay,' said Bunce, 'I only snatch at them when they come fairly in my way, or are purchased by dint of my own wit; and none of you could have fallen on such a plan as this. We shall have the captain with us, head, hand, and heart and all, besides making a scene fit to finish a comedy. So I will go ashore to make the appointment, and do you possess some of the gentlemen who are still sober, and fit to be trusted, with the knowledge of our intentions.'

Bunce, with his friend Fletcher, departed accordingly, and the two veteran pirates remained looking at each other in silence, until the boatswain spoke at last. 'Blow me, Derrick, if I like these two daffadandilly young fellows: they are not the true breed. Why, they are no more like the rovers I have known than this sloop is to a first-rate. Why, there was old Sharpe, that read prayers to his ship's company every Sunday, what would he have said to have heard it proposed to bring two wenches on board?'

'And what would tough old Black Beard have said,' answered his companion, 'if they had expected to keep them to themselves? They deserve to be made to walk the plank for their impudence; or to be tied back to back and set a-diving, and I care not how soon.'

'Ay, but who is to command the ship, then?' said Hawkins.

'Why, what ails you at old Goffe?' answered Derrick.

'Why, he has sucked the monkey so long and so often,' said the boatswain, 'that the best of him is buffed. He is little better than an old woman when he is sober, and he is roaring mad when he is drunk; we have had enough of Goffe.'

'Why, then, what d'ye say to yourself, or to me, boatswain?' demanded the qua ter-master. 'I am content to toss up for it.'

'Rot it, no,' answered the boatswain, after a moment's consideration; 'if we were within reach of the trade winds, we might either of us make a shift; but it will take all Cleveland's navigation to get us there; and so, I think, there is nothing like Bunce's project for the present. Hark, he calls for the boat; I must go on deck and have her lowered for his honour, d--n his eyes.'

The boat was lowered accordingly, made its voyage up the lake with safety, and landed Bunce within a few hundred yards of the old mansion-house of Stennis. Upon arriving in front of the house, he found that hasty measures had been taken to put it in a state of defence, the lower windows being barricaded, with places left for use of musketry, and a ship-gun being placed so as to command the entrance, which was besides guarded by two sentinels. Bunce demanded admission at the gate, which was briefly and unceremoniously refused, with an exhortation to him, at the same time, to be gone about his business before worse came of it. As he continued, however, importunately to insist on seeing some one of the family, and stated his business to be of the most urgent nature, Claud Halcro at length appeared, and, with more peevishness than belonged to his usual manner, that admirer of glorious John expostulated with his old acquaintance upon his pertinacious folly.

'You are,' he said, 'like foolish moths fluttering about a candle, which is sure at last to consume you.'

'And you,' said Bunce, 'are a set of stingless drones, whom we can smoke out of your defences at our pleasure, with half a dozen of hand-grenades.'

'Smoke a fool's head!' said Halcro; 'take my advice, and mind your own matters, or there will be those upon you will smoke you to purpose. Either begone or tell me in two words what you want; for you are like to receive no welcome here save from a blunderbuss. We are men enough of ourselves; and here is young Mordaunt Mertoun come from Hoy, whom your captain so nearly murdered.'

'Tush, man,' said Bunce, 'he did but let out a little malapert blood.'

'We want no such phlebotomy here,' said Claud Halcro; 'and, besides, your patient turns out to be nearer allied to us than either you or we thought of; so you may think how little welcome the captain or any of his crew are like to be here.'

'Well, but what if I bring money for the stores sent on board?'

'Keep it till it is asked of you,' said Halcro. 'There are two bad paymasters — he that pays too soon, and he that does not pay at all.'

'Well, then, let me at least give our thanks to the donor,' said Bunce.

'Keep them, too, till they are asked for,' answered the poet.

'So this is all the welcome I have of you for old acquaintance' sake!' said Bunce.

'Why, what can I do for you, Master Altamont?' said Halcro, somewhat moved. 'If young Mordaunt had had his own will, he would have welcomed you with "the red Burgundy, No. 1000." For God's sake begone, else the stage direction will be, "Enter guard, and seize Altamont."'

'I will not give you the trouble,' said Bunce, 'but will make my exit instantly. Stay a moment; I had almost forgot that I have a slip of paper for the tallest of your girls there — Minna, ay, Minna is her name. It is a farewell from Captain Cleveland; you cannot refuse to give it her!'

'Ah, poor fellow!' said Halcro; 'I comprehend — I comprehend. Farewell, fair Armida —'

'Mid pikes and 'mid bullets, 'mid tempest and fire,
The danger is less than in hopeless desire!

Tell me but this — is there poetry in it?'

'Chokeful to the seal with song, sonnet, and elegy,' answered Bunce; 'but let her have it cautiously and secretly.'

'Tush, man! teach me to deliver a billet-doux! — me, who have been in the Wits' Coffee-house, and have seen all the toasts of the Kit-Cat Club! Minna shall have it, then, for old acquaintance' sake, Mr. Altamont, and for your captain's sake too, who has less of the core of devil about him than his trade requires. There can be no harm in a farewell letter.'

'Farewell, then, old boy, for ever and a day!' said Bunce; and seizing the poet's hand, gave it so hearty a gripe that he left him roaring and shaking his fist, like a dog when a hot cinder has fallen on his foot.

Leaving the rover to return on board the vessel, we remain with the family of Magnus Troil, assembled at their kinsman's mansion of Stennis, where they maintained a constant and careful watch against surprise.

Mordaunt Merton had been received with much kindness by Magnus Troil, when he came to his assistance, with a small party of Norna's dependants, placed by her under his command. The

Udaller was easily satisfied that the reports instilled into his ears by the jagger, zealous to augment his favour towards his more profitable customer, Cleveland, by diminishing that of Mertoun, were without foundation. They had, indeed, been confirmed by the good Lady Glowrowrum and by common fame, both of whom were pleased to represent Mordaunt Mertoun as an arrogant pretender to the favour of the sisters of Burgh-Westra, who only hesitated, sultan-like, on whom he should bestow the handkerchief. But common fame, Magnus considered, was a common liar, and he was sometimes disposed, where scandal was concerned, to regard the good Lady Glowrowrum as rather an uncommon specimen of the same genus. He therefore received Mordaunt once more into full favour, listened with much surprise to the claim which Norna laid to the young man's duty, and with no less interest to her intention of surrendering to him the considerable property which she had inherited from her father. Nay, it is even probable that, though he gave no immediate answer to her hints concerning an union betwixt his eldest daughter and her heir, he might think such an alliance recommended as well by the young man's personal merits as by the chance it gave of reuniting the very large estate which had been divided betwixt his own father and that of Norna. At all events, the Udaller received his young friend with much kindness, and he and the proprietor of the mansion joined in entrusting to him, as the youngest and most active of the party, the charge of commanding the night-watch, and relieving the sentinels around the House of Stennis.

CHAPTER XL

Of an outlawe, this is the lawe —
That men him take and bind,
Without pitie hang'd to be,
And waive with the wind.

The Ballad of the Nut-Brown Maid.

MORDAUNT had caused the sentinels who had been on duty since midnight to be relieved ere the peep of day, and having given directions that the guard should be again changed at sunrise, he had retired to a small parlour, and, placing his arms beside him, was slumbering in an easy-chair, when he felt himself pulled by the watch-cloak in which he was enveloped.

'Is it sunrise,' said he, 'already?' as, starting up, he discovered the first beams lying level upon the horizon.

'Mordaunt!' said a voice, every note of which thrilled to his heart.

He turned his eyes on the speaker, and Brenda Troil, to his joyful astonishment, stood before him. As he was about to address her eagerly, he was checked by observing the signs of sorrow and discomposure in her pale cheeks, trembling lips, and brimful eyes.

'Mordaunt,' she said, 'you must do Minna and me a favour: you must allow us to leave the house quietly, and without alarming any one, in order to go as far as the Standing Stones of Stennis.'

'What freak can this be, dearest Brenda?' said Mordaunt, much amazed at the request — 'some Orcadian observance of superstition, perhaps; but the time is too dangerous, and my charge from your father too strict, that I should permit you to pass without his consent. Consider, dearest Brenda, I am a soldier on duty, and must obey orders.'

'Mordaunt,' said Brenda, 'this is no jesting matter: Minna's reason — nay, Minna's life, depends on your giving us this permission.'

'And for what purpose?' said Mordaunt; 'let me at least know that.'

'For a wild and a desperate purpose,' replied Brenda. 'It is that she may meet Cleveland.'

'Cleveland!' said Mordaunt. 'Should the villain come ashore, he shall be welcomed with a shower of rifle-balls. Let me within a hundred yards of him,' he added, grasping his piece, 'and all the mischief he has done me shall be balanced with an ounce bullet!'

'His death will drive Minna frantic,' said Brenda; 'and he who injures Minna, Brenda will never again look upon.'

'This is madness — raving madness!' said Mordaunt. 'Consider your honour — consider your duty.'

'I can consider nothing but Minna's danger,' said Brenda, breaking into a flood of tears: 'her former illness was nothing to the state she has been in all night. She holds in her hand his letter, written in characters of fire rather than of ink, imploring her to see him, for a last farewell, as she would save a mortal body and an immortal soul; pledging himself for her safety; and declaring no power shall force him from the coast till he has seen her. You *must* let us pass.'

'It is impossible!' replied Mordaunt, in great perplexity. 'This ruffian has imprecations enough, doubtless, at his fingers' ends; but what better pledge has he to offer? I cannot permit Minna to go.'

'I suppose,' said Brenda, somewhat reproachfully, while she dried her tears, yet still continued sobbing, 'that there is something in what Norna spoke of betwixt Minna and you: and that you are too jealous of this poor wretch to allow him even to speak with her an instant before his departure.'

'You are unjust,' said Mordaunt, hurt, and yet somewhat flattered, by her suspicions — 'you are as unjust as you are imprudent. You know — you cannot but know — that Minna is chiefly dear to me as *your* sister. Tell me, Brenda — and tell me truly — if I aid you in this folly, have you no suspicion of the pirate's faith?'

'No, none,' said Brenda; 'if I had any, do you think I would urge you thus? He is wild and unhappy, but I think we may in this trust him.'

'Is the appointed place the Standing Stones, and the time daybreak?' again demanded Mordaunt.

'It is, and the time is come,' said Brenda; 'for Heaven's sake, let us depart!'

'I will myself,' said Mordaunt, 'relieve the sentinel at the front door for a few minutes, and suffer you to pass. You will not protract this interview, so full of danger?'

'We will not,' said Brenda; 'and you, on your part, will not avail yourself of this unhappy man's venturing hither to harm or to seize him?'

'Rely on my honour,' said Mordaunt. 'He shall have no harm unless he offers any.'

'Then I go to call my sister,' said Brenda, and quickly left the apartment.

Mordaunt considered the matter for an instant, and then going to the sentinel at the front door, he desired him to run instantly to the main-guard, and order the whole to turn out with their arms; to see the order obeyed, and to return when they were in readiness. Meantime, he himself, he said, would remain upon the post.

During the interval of the sentinel's absence, the front door was slowly opened, and Minna and Brenda appeared, muffled in their mantles. The former leaned on her sister, and kept her face bent on the ground, as one who felt ashamed of the step she was about to take. Brenda also passed her lover in silence, but threw back upon him a look of gratitude and affection, which doubled, if possible, his anxiety for their safety.

The sisters, in the meanwhile, passed out of sight of the house; when Minna, whose step till that time had been faint and feeble, began to erect her person and to walk with a pace so firm and so swift that Brenda, who had some difficulty to keep up with her, could not forbear remonstrating on the imprudence of hurrying her spirits and exhausting her force by such unnecessary haste.

'Fear not, my dearest sister,' said Minna: 'the spirit which I now feel will, and must, sustain me through the dreadful interview. I could not but move with a drooping head and a dejected pace while I was in view of one who must necessarily deem me deserving of his pity or his scorn. But you know, my dearest Brenda, and Mordaunt shall also know, that the love I bore to that unhappy man was as pure as the rays of that sun that is now reflected on the waves. And I dare attest that glorious sun and yonder blue heaven to bear me witness that, but to urge him to change his unhappy course of life, I had not, for all the temptations this round world holds, ever consented to see him more.'

As she spoke thus, in a tone which afforded much confidence

to Brenda, the sisters attained the summit of a rising ground, whence they commanded a full view of the Orcadian Stonehenge, consisting of a huge circle and semicircle of the Standing Stones, as they are called, which already glimmered a greyish white in the rising sun, and projected far to the westward their long gigantic shadows. At another time, the scene would have operated powerfully on the imaginative mind of Minna, and interested the curiosity at least of her less sensitive sister. But at this moment neither was at leisure to receive the impressions which this stupendous monument of antiquity is so well calculated to impress on the feelings of those who behold it: for they saw in the lower lake, beneath what is termed the Bridge of Broisgar, a boat well manned and armed, which had disembarked one of its crew, who advanced alone, and wrapped in a naval cloak, towards that monumental circle which they themselves were about to reach from another quarter.

'They are many, and they are armed,' said the startled Brenda, in a whisper to her sister.

'It is for precaution's sake,' answered Minna, 'which, alas! their condition renders but too necessary. Fear no treachery from him; that, at least, is not his vice.'

As she spoke, or shortly afterwards, she attained the centre of the circle, on which, in the midst of the tall, erect pillars of rude stone that are raised around, lies one flat and prostrate, supported by short stone pillars, of which some relics are still visible, that had once served, perhaps, the purpose of an altar.

'Here,' she said, 'in heathen times (if we may believe legends which have cost me but too dear), our ancestors offered sacrifices to heathen deities; and here will I, from my soul, renounce, abjure, and offer up to a better and a more merciful God than was known to them the vain ideas with which my youthful imagination has been seduced.'

She stood by the prostrate table of stone, and saw Cleveland advance towards her, with a timid pace and a downcast look, as different from his usual character and bearing as Minna's high air and lofty demeanour, and calm, contemplative posture, were distant from those of the love-lorn and broken-hearted maiden whose weight had almost borne down the support of her sister as she left the House of Stennis. If the belief of those is true who assign these singular monuments exclusively to the Druids, Minna might have seemed the Haxa, or high priestess, of the order, from whom some champion of the tribe expected inauguration. Or, if we hold the circles of Gothic and

Scandinavian origin, she might have seemed a descended vision of Freya, the spouse of the Thundering Deity, before whom some bold sea-king or champion bent with an awe which no mere mortal terror could have inflicted upon him. Brenda, overwhelmed with inexpressible fear and doubt, remained a pace or two behind, anxiously observing the motions of Cleveland and attending to nothing around save to him and to her sister.

Cleveland approached within two yards of Minna, and bent his head to the ground. There was a dead pause, until Minna said, in a firm but melancholy tone, 'Unhappy man, why didst thou seek this aggravation of our woe? Depart in peace, and may Heaven direct thee to a better course than that which thy life has yet held!'

'Heaven will not aid me,' said Cleveland, 'excepting by your voice. I came hither rude and wild, scarce knowing that my trade — my desperate trade, was more criminal in the sight of man or of Heaven than that of those privateers whom your law acknowledges. I was bred in it, and, but for the wishes you have encouraged me to form, I should have perhaps died in it, desperate and impenitent. Oh, do not throw me from you! let me do something to redeem what I have done amiss, and do not leave your own work half-finished!'

'Cleveland,' said Minna, 'I will not reproach you with abusing my inexperience, or with availing yourself of those delusions which the credulity of early youth had flung around me, and which led me to confound your fatal course of life with the deeds of our ancient heroes. Alas, when I saw your followers that illusion was no more! but I do not upbraid you with its having existed. Go, Cleveland; detach yourself from those miserable wretches with whom you are associated, and believe me that, if Heaven yet grants you the means of distinguishing your name by one good or glorious action, there are eyes left in these lonely islands that will weep as much for joy as — as — they must now do for sorrow.'

'And is this all?' said Cleveland; 'and may I not hope that, if I extricate myself from my present associates; if I can gain my pardon by being as bold in the right as I have been too often in the wrong cause; if, after a term, I care not how long, but still a term which may have an end, I can boast of having redeemed my fame, may I not — may I not hope that Minna may forgive what my God and my country shall have pardoned?'

'Never, Cleveland — never!' said Minna, with the utmost

firmness; 'on this spot we part, and part for ever, and part without longer indulgence. Think of me as of one dead, if you continue as you now are; but if, which may Heaven grant, you change your fatal course, think of me then as one whose morning and evening prayers will be for your happiness, though she has lost her own. Farewell, Cleveland!'

He kneeled, overpowered by his own bitter feelings, to take the hand which she held out to him, and in that instant his confidant Bunce, starting from behind one of the large upright pillars, his eyes wet with tears, exclaimed—

'Never saw such a parting scene on any stage! But I'll be d—d if you make your exit as you expect!'

And so saying, ere Cleveland could employ either remonstrance or resistance, and indeed before he could get upon his feet, he easily secured him by pulling him down on his back, so that two or three of the boat's crew seized him by the arms and legs, and began to hurry him towards the lake. Minna and Brenda shrieked, and attempted to fly; but Derrick snatched up the former with as much ease as a falcon pounces on a pigeon, while Bunce, with an oath or two which were intended to be of a consolatory nature, seized on Brenda; and the whole party, with two or three of the other pirates, who, stealing from the water-side, had accompanied them on the ambuscade, began hastily to run towards the boat, which was left in charge of two of their number. Their course, however, was unexpectedly interrupted, and their criminal purpose entirely frustrated.

When Mordaunt Mertoun had turned out his guard in arms, it was with the natural purpose of watching over the safety of the two sisters. They had accordingly closely observed the motions of the pirates, and when they saw so many of them leave the boat and steal towards the place of rendezvous assigned to Cleveland, they naturally suspected treachery, and by cover of an old hollow way or trench, which perhaps had anciently been connected with the monumental circle, they had thrown themselves unperceived between the pirates and their boat. At the cries of the sisters, they started up and placed themselves in the way of the ruffians, presenting their pieces, which, notwithstanding, they dared not fire, for fear of hurting the young ladies, secured as they were in the rude grasp of the marauders. Mordaunt, however, advanced with the speed of a wild deer on Bunce, who, loth to quit his prey, yet unable to defend himself otherwise, turned to this side and that alternately, exposing Brenda to the blows which Mordaunt

offered at him. This defence, however, proved in vain against a youth possessed of the lightest foot and most active hand ever known in Zetland, and, after a feint or two, Mordaunt brought the pirate to the ground with a stroke from the butt of the carabine, which he dared not use otherwise. At the same time firearms were discharged on either side by those who were liable to no such cause of forbearance, and the pirates who had hold of Cleveland dropped him, naturally enough, to provide for their own defence or retreat. But they only added to the numbers of their enemies; for Cleveland, perceiving Minna in the arms of Derrick, snatched her from the ruffian with one hand, and with the other shot him dead on the spot. Two or three more of the pirates fell or were taken, the rest fled to their boat, pushed off, then turned their broadside to the shore, and fired repeatedly on the Orcadian party, which they returned, with little injury on either side. Meanwhile Mordaunt, having first seen that the sisters were at liberty and in full flight towards the house, advanced on Cleveland with his cutlass drawn. The pirate presented a pistol, and calling out at the same time, 'Mordaunt, I never missed my aim,' he fired into the air, and threw it into the lake; then drew his cutlass, brandished it round his head, and flung that also as far as his arm could send it, in the same direction. Yet such was the universal belief of his personal strength and resources, that Mordaunt still used precaution, as, advancing on Cleveland, he asked if he surrendered.

'I surrender to no man,' said the pirate captain; 'but you may see I have thrown away my weapons.'

He was immediately seized by some of the Orcadians without his offering any resistance; but the instant interference of Mordaunt prevented his being roughly treated or bound. The victors conducted him to a well-secured upper apartment in the House of Stennis, and placed a sentinel at the door. Bunce and Fletcher, both of whom had been stretched on the field during the skirmish, were lodged in the same chamber; and two prisoners, who appeared of lower rank, were confined in a vault belonging to the mansion.

Without pretending to describe the joy of Magnus Troil, who, when awakened by the noise and firing, found his daughters safe and his enemy a prisoner, we shall only say, it was so great that he forgot, for the time at least, to inquire what circumstances were those which had placed them in danger; and that he hugged Mordaunt to his breast a thousand times, as

their preserver ; and swore as often by the bones of his sainted namesake that, if he had a thousand daughters, so tight a lad and so true a friend should have the choice of them, let Lady Glowrowrum say what she would.

A very different scene was passing in the prison-chamber of the unfortunate Cleveland and his associates. The captain sat by the window, his eyes bent on the prospect of the sea which it presented, and was seemingly so intent on it as to be insensible of the presence of the others. Jack Bunce stood meditating some ends of verse, in order to make his advances towards a reconciliation with Cleveland ; for he began to be sensible, from the consequences, that the part he had played towards his captain, however well intended, was neither lucky in its issue nor likely to be well taken. His admirer and adherent, Fletcher, lay half asleep, as it seemed, on a truckle-bed in the room, without the least attempt to interfere in the conversation which ensued.

'Nay, but speak to me, Clement,' said the penitent lieutenant, 'if it be but to swear at me for my stupidity !

What ! not an oath ? Nay, then the world goes hard,
If Clifford cannot spare his friends an oath.'

'I prithee peace, and begone !' said Cleveland ; 'I have one bosom friend left yet, and you will make me bestow its contents on you or on myself.'

'I have it !' said Bunce — 'I have it !' and on he went in the vein of Jaffer —

'Then, by the hell I merit, I'll not leave thee,
Till to thyself at least thou'rt reconciled,
However thy resentment deal with me !'

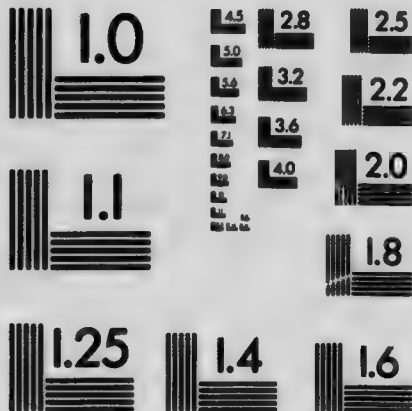
'I pray you once more to be silent,' said Cleveland. 'Is it not enough that you have undone me with your treachery, but you must stun me with your silly buffoonery ? I would not have believed *you* would have lifted a finger against me, Jack, of any man or devil in yonder unhappy ship.'

'Who, I ?' exclaimed Bunce. 'I lift a finger against you ! and if I did, it was in pure love, and to make you the happiest fellow that ever trode a deck, with your mistress beside you, and fifty fine fellows at your command. Here is Dick Fletcher can bear witness I did all for the best, if he would but speak, instead of lolloping there like a Dutch dogger laid up to be careened. Get up, Dick, and speak for me, won't you ?



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'Why, yes, Jack Bunce,' answered Fletcher, raising himself with difficulty, and speaking feebly, 'I will if I can, and I always knew you spoke and did for the best; but howsomdever, d'ye see, it has turned out for the worst for me this time, for I am bleeding to death, I think.'

'You cannot be such an ass!' said Jack Bunce, springing to his assistance, as did Cleveland. But human aid came too late: he sank back on the bed, and, turning on his face, expired without a groan.

'I always thought him a d—d fool,' said Bunce, as he wiped a tear from his eye, 'but never such a consummate idiot as to hop the perch so sillily. I have lost the best follower ——' and he again wiped his eye.

Cleveland looked on the dead body, the rugged features of which had remained unaltered by the death-pang. 'A bulldog,' he said, 'of the true British breed, and, with a better counsellor, would have been a better man.'

'You may say that of some other folks, too, captain, if you are minded to do them justice,' said Bunce.

'I may indeed, and especially of yourself,' said Cleveland in reply.

'Why then, say, "Jack, I forgive you,"' said Bunce; 'it's but a short word, and soon spoken.'

'I forgive you from all my soul, Jack,' said Cleveland, who had resumed his situation at the window; 'and the rather that your folly is of little consequence: the morning is come that must bring ruin on us all.'

'What! you are thinking of the old woman's prophecy you spoke of?' said Bunce.

'It will be soon accomplished,' answered Cleveland. 'Come hither; what do you take yon large square-rigged vessel for, that you see doubling the headland on the east, and opening the Bay of Stromness?'

'Why, I can't make her well out,' said Bunce, 'but yonder is old Goffe takes her for a West Indiaman loaded with rum and sugar, I suppose, for d—n me if he does not slip cable and stand out to her!'

'Instead of running into the shoal-water, which was his only safety,' said Cleveland. 'The fool! the dotard! the drivelling, drunken idiot! he will get his flip hot enough; for yon is the "Halcyon." See, she hoists her colours and fires a broadside! and there will soon be an end of the "Fortune's Favourite"! I only hope they will fight her to the last plank. The boat-

swain used to be stanch enough, and so is Goffe, though an incarnate demon. Now she shoots away, with all the sail she can spread, and that shows some sense.

'Up goes the Jolly Hodge, the old black flag, with the death's-head and hour-glass, and that shows some spunk,' added his comrade.

'The hour-glass is turned for us, Jack, for this bout: our sand is running fast. Fire away yet, my roving lads! The deep sea or the blue sky rather than a rope and a yard-arm!'

There was a moment of anxious and dead silence; the sloop, though hard pressed, maintaining still a running fight, and the frigate continuing in full chase, but scarce returning a shot. At length the vessels neared each other, so as to show that the man-of-war intended to board the sloop, instead of sinking her, probably to secure the plunder which might be in the pirate vessel.

'Now, Goffe — now, boatswain!' exclaimed Cleveland, in an ecstacy of impatience, and as if they could have heard his commands, 'stand by sheets and tacks — rake her with a broadside, when you are under her bows, then about ship, and go off on the other tack like a wild goose. The sails shiver — the helm's a-lee. Ah! deep sea sink the lubbers! they miss stays, and the frigate runs them aboard!'

Accordingly, the various manœuvres of the chase had brought them so near that Cleveland, with his spy-glass, could see the man-of-war's-men boarding by the yards and bowsprit, in irresistible numbers, their naked cutlasses flashing in the sun, when, at that critical moment, both ships were enveloped in a cloud of thick black smoke, which suddenly arose on board the captured pirate.

'*Exeunt omnes!*' said Bunce, with clasped hands.

'There went the "Fortune's Favourite," ship and crew!' said Cleveland, at the same instant.

But the smoke immediately clearing away, showed that the damage had only been partial, and that from want of a sufficient quantity of powder, the pirates had failed in their desperate attempt to blow up their vessel with the "Halcyon."

Shortly after the action was over, Captain Weatherport of the "Halcyon" sent an officer and a party of marines to the House of Stennis, to demand from the little garrison the pirate seamen who were their prisoners, and, in particular, Cleveland and Bunce, who acted as captain and lieutenant of the gang.

This was a demand which was not to be resisted, though

Magnus Troil could have wished sincerely that the roof under which he lived had been allowed as an asylum at least to Cleveland. But the officer's orders were peremptory; and he added, it was Captain Weatherport's intention to land the other prisoners, and send the whole, with a sufficient escort, across the island to Kirkwall, in order to undergo an examination there before the civil authorities, previous to their being sent off to London for trial at the High Court of Admiralty. Magnus could therefore only intercede for good usage to Cleveland, and that he might not be stripped or plundered, which the officer, struck by his good mien, and compassionating his situation, readily promised. The honest Udaller would have said something in the way of comfort to Cleveland himself, but he could not find words to express it, and only shook his head.

'Old friend,' said Cleveland, 'you may have much to complain of, yet you pity instead of exulting over me; for the sake of you and yours, I will never harm human being more. Take this from me — my last hope, but my last temptation also'; he drew from his bosom a pocket-pistol, and gave it to Magnus Troil. 'Remember me to — But no, let every one forget me. I am your prisoner, sir,' said he to the officer.

'And I also,' said poor Bunce; and putting on a theatrical countenance, he ranted, with no very perceptible faltering in his tone, the words of Pierre :

'Captain, you should be a gentleman of honour;
Keep off the rabble, that I may have room
To entertain my fate, and die with decency.'

CHAPTER XLI

Joy, joy, in London now !

SOUTHEY.

THE news of the capture of the rover reached Kirkwall about an hour before noon, and filled all men with wonder and with joy. Little business was that day done at the fair, whilst people of all ages and occupations streamed from the place to see the prisoners as they were marched towards Kirkwall, and to triumph in the different appearance which they now bore from that which they had formerly exhibited when ranting, swaggering, and bullying in the streets of that town. The bayonets of the marines were soon seen to glisten in the sun, and then came on the melancholy troop of captives, handcuffed two and two together. Their finery had been partly torn from them by their captors, partly hung in rags about them ; many were wounded and covered with blood, many blackened and scorched with the explosion by which a few of the most desperate had in vain striven to blow up the vessel. Most of them seemed sullen and impenitent, some were more becomingly affected with their condition, and a few braved it out, and sung the same ribald songs to which they had made the streets of Kirkwall ring when they were in their frolics.

The boatswain and Goffe, coupled together, exhausted themselves in threats and imprecations against each other ; the former charging Goffe with want of seamanship, and the latter alleging that the boatswain had prevented him from firing the powder that was stowed forward, and so sending them all to the other world together. Last came Cleveland and Bunce, were permitted to walk unshackled ; the decent melancholy, yet resolved manner, of the former contrasting strongly with the stage strut and swagger which poor Jack thought it fitting to assume, in order to conceal some less dignified emotions. The former was looked upon with compassion, the latter with a mixture of scorn and pity ; while most of the

others inspired horror, and even fear, by their looks and their language.

There was one individual in Kirkwall who was so far from hastening to see the sight which attracted all eyes, that he was not even aware of the event which agitated the town. This was the elder Mertoun, whose residence Kirkwall had been for two or three days, part of which had been spent in attending to some judicial proceedings, undertaken at the instance of the procurator-fiscal, against that grave professor, Bryce Snailsfoot. In consequence of an inquisition into the proceedings of this worthy trader, Cleveland's chest, with his papers and other matters therein contained, had been restored to Mertoun, as the lawful custodier thereof, until the right owner should be in a situation to establish his right to them. Mertoun was at first desirous to throw back upon justice the charge which she was disposed to entrust him with; but, on perusing one or two of the papers, he hastily changed his mind — in broken words, requested the magistrate to let the chest be sent to his lodgings, and, hastening homeward, bolted himself into the room, to consider and digest the singular information which chance had thus conveyed to him, and which increased, in a tenfold degree, his impatience for an interview with the mysterious Norna of the Fitful Head.

It may be remembered that she had required of him, when they met in the churchyard of St. Ninian, to attend in the outer aisle of the cathedral of St. Magnus, at the hour of noon, on the fifth day of the fair of St. Olla, there to meet a person by whom the fate of Mordaunt would be explained to him. 'It must be herself,' he said; 'and that I should see her at this moment is indispensable. How to find her sooner I know not; and better lose a few hours even in this exigence than offend her by a premature attempt to force myself on her presence.'

Long, therefore, before noon — long before the town of Kirkwall was agitated by the news of the events on the other side of the island, the elder Mertoun was pacing the deserted aisle of the cathedral, awaiting, with agonising eagerness, the expected communication from Norna. The bell tolled twelve — no door opened — no one was seen to enter the cathedral — but the last sounds had not ceased to reverberate through the vaulted roof when, gliding from one of the interior side-aisles, Norna stood before him. Mertoun, indifferent to the apparent mystery of her sudden approach (with the secret of which the

reader is acquainted), went up to her at once, with the earnest ejaculation — 'Ulla — Ulla Troil, aid me to save our unhappy boy!'

'To Ulla Troil,' said Norna, 'I answer not: I gave that name to the winds on the night that cost me a father!'

'Speak not of that night of horror,' said Mertoun; 'we have need of our reason — let us not think on recollections which may destroy it; but aid me, if thou canst, to save our unfortunate child!'

'Vaughan,' answered Norna, 'he is already saved — long since saved; think you a mother's hand — and that of such a mother as I am — would await your crawling, tardy, ineffectual assistance? No, Vaughan, I make myself known to you but to show my triumph over you: it is the only revenge which the powerful Norna permits herself to take for the wrongs of Ulla Troil.'

Have you indeed saved him — saved him from the murderous crew?' said Mertoun, or Vaughan — 'speak! and speak truth! I will believe everything — all you would require me to assent to! — prove to me only he is escaped and safe!'

'Escaped and safe, by my means,' said Norna — 'safe, and in assurance of an honoured and happy alliance. Yes, great unbeliever! — yes, wise and self-opinioned infidel! these were the works of Norna! I knew you many a year since; but never had I made myself known to you save with the triumphant consciousness of having controlled the destiny that threatened my son. All combined against him: planets which threatened drowning — combinations which menaced blood; but my skill was superior to all. I arranged — I combined — I found means — I made them — each disaster has been averted; and what infidel on earth, or stubborn demon beyond the bounds of earth, shall hereafter deny my power?'

The wild ecstasy with which she spoke so much resembled triumphant insanity that Mertoun answered — 'Were your pretensions less lofty, and your speech more plain, I should be better assured of my son's safety.'

'Doubt on, vain sceptic!' said Norna. 'And yet know, that not only is our son safe, but vengeance is mine, though I sought it not — vengeance on the powerful complement of the darker Influences by whom my schemes were often thwarted, and even the life of my son endangered. Yes, take it as a guarantee of the truth of my speech that Cleveland — the pirate Cleveland — even now enters Kirkwall as a prisoner, and will

soon expiate with his life the having shed blood which is of kin to Norna's.

'Who didst thou say was prisoner?' exclaimed Mertoun, with a voice of thunder — '*who*, woman, didst thou say should expiate his crimes with his life?'

'Cleveland — the pirate Cleveland!' answered Norna; 'and by me, whose counsel he scorned, he has been permitted to meet his fate.'

'Thou most wretched of women!' said Mertoun, speaking from between his clenched teeth, 'thou hast slain thy son as well as thy father!'

'My son! what son? what mean you? Mordaunt is your son — your only son!' exclaimed Norna, 'is he not? — tell me quickly, is he not?'

'Mordaunt is indeed *my* son,' said Mertoun; 'the laws, at least, gave him to me as such. But, O unhappy Ulla! Cleveland is your son as well as mine — blood of our blood, bone of our bone; and if you have given him to death, I will end my wretched life along with him!'

'Stay — hold — stop, Vaughan!' said Norna; 'I am not yet overcome — prove but to me the truth of what you say, I would find help, if I should evoke hell! But prove your words, else believe them I cannot.'

'*Thou* help! wretched, overweening woman! In what have thy combinations and thy stratagems — the legerdemain of lunacy — the mere quackery of insanity — in what have these involved thee? And yet I will speak to thee as reasonable — nay, I will admit thee as powerful. Hear, then, Ulla, the proofs which you demand, and find a remedy, if thou canst: —

'When I fled from Orkney,' he continued, after a pause — 'it is now five-and-twenty years since — I bore with me the unhappy offspring to whom you had given light. It was sent to me by one of your kinswomen, with an account of your illness, which was soon followed by a generally received belief of your death. It avails not to tell in what misery I left Europe. I found refuge in Hispaniola, wherein a fair young Spaniard undertook the task of comforter. I married her; she became mother of the youth called Mordaunt Mertoun.'

'You married her!' said Norna, in a tone of deep reproach.

'I did, Ulla,' answered Mertoun; 'but you were avenged. She proved faithless, and her infidelity left me in doubts whether the child she bore had a right to call me father. But I also was avenged.'

'You murdered her!' said Norna, with a dreadful shriek.

'I did that,' said Mertoun, without a more direct reply, 'which made an instant flight from Hispaniola necessary. Your son I carried with me to Tortuga, where we had a small settlement. Mordaunt Vaughan, my son by marriage, about three or four years younger, was residing in Port Royal, for the advantages of an English education. I resolved never to see him again, but I continued to support him. Our settlement was plundered by the Spaniards when Clement was but fifteen. Want came to aid despair and a troubled conscience. I became a corsair, and involved Clement in the same desperate trade. His skill and bravery, though then a mere boy, gained him a separate command; and after a lapse of two or three years, while we were on different cruises, my crew rose on me, and left me for dead on the beach of one of the Bermudas. I recovered, however, and my first inquiries, after a tedious illness, were after Clement. He, I heard, had been also marooned by a rebellious crew, and put ashore on a desert islet, to perish with want. I believed he had so perished.'

'And what assures you that he did not?' said Ulla; 'or how comes this Cleveland to be identified with Vaughan?'

'To change a name is common with such adventurers,' answered Mertoun; 'and Clement had apparently found that of Vaughan had become too notorious; and this change, in his case, prevented me from hearing any tidings of him. It was then that remorse seized me, and that, detesting all nature, but especially the sex to which Louisa belonged, I resolved to do penance in the wild islands of Zetland for the rest of my life. I subjected myself to fasts and to the scourge was the advice of the holy Catholic priests whom I consulted. But I devoted myself to other penance: I determined to bring with me the unhallowed body of Mordaunt, and to keep always before me the living memorial of my misery and my guilt. I have done so, and I have thought over both till reason has often trembled on her throne. And now, to drive me to utter madness, my Clement — my own, my undoubted son — revives from the dead to be consigned to an infamous death by the machinations of his own mother!'

'Away — away!' said Norna, with a laugh, when she had heard the story to an end, 'this is a legend framed by the old corsair to interest my aid in favour of a guilty comrade. How could I mistake Mordaunt for my son, their ages being so different?'

'The dark complexion and manly stature may have done much,' said Basil Mertoun; 'strong imagination must have done the rest.'

'But give me proofs — give me proofs that this Cleveland is my son, and, believe me, this sun shall sooner sink in the east than they shall have power to harm a hair of his head.'

'These papers — these journals,' said Mertoun, offering the pocket-book.

'I cannot read them,' she said, after an effort: 'my brain is dizzy.'

'Clement had also tokens which you may remember, but they must have become the booty of his captors. He had a silver box with a Runic inscription, with which in far other days you presented me — a golden chaplet.'

'A box!' said Norna, hastily. 'Cleveland gave me one but a day since; I have never looked at it till now.'

Eagerly she pulled it out, eagerly examined the legend around the lid, and as eagerly exclaimed — 'They may now indeed call me Reim-kennar, for by this rhyme I know myself murderess of my son as well as of my father!'

The conviction of the strong delusion under which she had laboured was so overwhelming that she sunk down at the foot of one of the pillars. Mertoun shouted for help, though in despair of receiving any; the sexton, however, entered, and, hopeless of all assistance from Norna, the distracted father rushed out, to learn, if possible, the fate of his son.

CHAPTER XLII

Go, some of you, cry a reprieve !

Beggar's Opera.

CAPTAIN WEATHERPORT had, before this time, reached Kirkwall in person, and was received with great joy and thankfulness by the magistrates, who had assembled in council for the purpose. The provost, in particular, expressed himself delighted with the providential arrival of the 'Halcyon' at the very conjuncture when the pirate could not escape her. The captain looked a little surprised, and said, 'For that, sir, you may thank the information you yourself supplied.'

'That I supplied !' said the provost, somewhat astonished.

'Yes, sir,' answered Captain Weatherport, 'I understand you to be George Torfe, chief magistrate of Kirkwall, who subscribes this letter.'

The astonished provost took the letter addressed to Captain Weatherport of the 'Halcyon,' stating the arrival, force, etc., of the pirates' vessel; but adding, that they had heard of the 'Halcyon' being on the coast, and that they were on their guard and ready to baffle her, by going among the shoals, and through the islands and holms, where the frigate could not easily follow; and, at the worst, they were desperate enough to propose running the sloop ashore and blowing her up, by which much booty and treasure would be lost to the captors. The letter, therefore, suggested that the 'Halcyon' should cruise betwixt Duncansbay Head and Cape Wrath for two or three days, to relieve the pirates of the alarm her neighbourhood occasioned, and lull them into security, the more especially as the letter-writer knew it to be their intention, if the frigate left the coast, to go into Stromness Bay, and there put their guns ashore for some necessary repairs, or even for careening their vessel, if they could find means. The letter concluded by assuring Captain Weatherport that, if he could bring his frigate into

Stromness Bay on the morning of the 24th of August, he would have a good bargain of the pirates; if sooner, he was not unlikely to miss them.

'This letter is not of my writing or subscribing, Captain Weatherport,' said the provost; 'nor would I have ventured to advise any delay in your coming hither.'

The captain was surprised in his turn. 'All I know is, that it reached me when I was in the Bay of Thurso, and that I gave the boat's crew that brought it five dollars for crossing the Pentland Firth in very rough weather. They had a dumb dwarf as cockswain, the ugliest urchin my eyes ever opened upon. I give you much credit for the accuracy of your intelligence, Mr. Provost.'

'It is lucky as it is,' said the provost; 'yet I question whether the writer of this letter would not rather that you had found the nest cold and the bird flown.'

So saying, he handed the letter to Magnus Troil, who returned it with a smile, but without any observation, aware, doubtless, with the sagacious reader, that Norna had her own reasons for calculating with accuracy on the date of the 'Halcyon's' arrival.

Without puzzling himself farther concerning a circumstance which seemed inexplicable, the captain requested that the examinations might proceed; and Cleveland and Altamont, as he chose to be called, were brought up the first of the pirate crew, on the charge of having acted as captain and lieutenant. They had just commenced the examination when, after some expostulation with the officers who kept the door, Basil Mertoun burst into the apartment and exclaimed, 'Take the old victim for the young one! I am Basil Vaughan, too well known on the Windward station — take my life, and spare my son's!'

All were astonished, and none more than Magnus Troil, who hastily explained to the magistrates and Captain Weatherport that this gentleman had been living peaceably and honestly on the Mainland of Zetland for many years.

'In that case,' said the captain, 'I wash my hands of the poor man, for he is safe, under two proclamations of mercy; and, by my soul, when I see them, the father and his offspring, hanging on each other's neck, I wish I could say as much for the son.'

'But how is it — how can it be?' said the provost: 'we always called the old man Mertoun, and the young Cleveland, and now it seems they are both named Vaughan.'

'Vaughan,' answered Magnus, 'is a name which I have some reason to remember; and, from what I have lately heard from my cousin Norna, that old man has a right to bear it.'

'And I trust, the young man also,' said the captain, who had been looking over a memorandum. 'Listen to me a moment,' added he, addressing the younger Vaughan, whom we have hitherto called Cleveland. 'Hark you, sir, your name is said to be Clement Vaughan — are you the same who, then a mere boy, commanded a party of rovers, who, about eight or nine years ago, pillaged a Spanish village called Quempoa, on the Spanish Main, with the purpose of seizing some treasure?'

'It will avail me nothing to deny it,' answered the prisoner.

'No,' said Captain Weatherport, 'but it may do you service to admit it. Well, the muleteers escaped with the treasure, while you were engaged in protecting, at the hazard of your own life, the honour of two Spanish ladies against the brutality of your followers. Do you remember anything of this?'

'I am sure I do,' said Jack Bunce; 'for our captain here was marooned for his gallantry, and I narrowly escaped flogging and pickling for having taken his part.'

'When these points are established,' said Captain Weatherport, 'Vaughan's life is safe: the women he saved were persons of quality, daughters to the governor of the province, and application was long since made by the grateful Spaniard to our government for favour to be shown to their preserver. I had special orders about Clement Vaughan when I had a commission for cruising upon the pirates, in the West Indies, six or seven years since. But Vaughan was gone then as a name amongst them; and I heard enough of Cleveland in his room. However, captain, be you Cleveland or Vaughan, I think that, as the Quempoa hero, I can assure you a free pardon when you arrive in London.'

Cleveland bowed, and the blood mounted to his face. Mertoun fell on his knees and exhausted himself in thanksgiving to Heaven. They were removed, amidst the sympathising sobs of the spectators.

'And now, good Master Lieutenant, what have you got to say for yourself?' said Captain Weatherport to the *ci-devant* Roscius.

'Why, little or nothing, please your honour; only that I wish your honour could find my name in that book of mercy you have in your hand; for I stood by Captain Clement Vaughan in that Quempoa business.'

'You call yourself Frederick Altamont,' said Captain

Weatherport. 'I can see no such name here; one John Bounce, or Bunce, the lady put on her tablets.'

'Why, that is me — that is I myself, captain — I can prove it, and I am determined, though the sound be something plebeian, rather to live Jack Bunce than to hang as Frederick Altamont.'

'In that case,' said the captain, 'I can give you some hopes as John Bunce.'

'Thank your noble worship!' shouted Bunce; then changing his tone, he said, 'Ah, since an *alias* has such virtue, poor Dick Fletcher might have come off as Timothy Tugmutton; but howsomdever, d'ye see, to use his own phrase —'

'Away with the lieutenant,' said the captain, 'and bring forward Goffe and the other fellows; there will be ropes reeved for some of them, I think.' And this prediction promised to be amply fulfilled, so strong was the proof which was brought against them.

The 'Halcyon' was accordingly ordered round to carry the whole prisoners to London, for which she set sail in the course of two days.

During the time that the unfortunate Cleveland remained at Kirkwall, he was treated with civility by the captain of the 'Halcyon'; and the kindness of his old acquaintance, Magnus Troil, who knew in secret how closely he was allied to his blood, pressed on him accommodations of every kind, more than he could be prevailed on to accept.

Norna, whose interest in the unhappy prisoner was still more deep, was at this time unable to express it. The sexton had found her lying on the pavement in a swoon, and when she recovered, her mind for the time had totally lost its equipoise, and it became necessary to place her under the restraint of watchful attendants.

Of the sisters of Burgh-Westra, Cleveland only heard that they remained ill, in consequence of the fright to which they had been subjected, until the evening before the 'Halcyon' sailed, when he received, by a private conveyance, the following billet: — 'Farewell, Cleveland; we part for ever, and it is right that we should. Be virtuous and be happy. The delusions which a solitary education and limited acquaintance with the modern world had spread around me are gone and dissipated for ever. But in you, I am sure, I have been thus far free from error, that you are one to whom good is naturally more attractive than evil, and whom only necessity, example, and habit have forced into your late course of life. Think of me as one

who no longer exists, unless you should become as much the object of general praise as now of general reproach; and then think of me as one who will rejoice in your reviving fame, though she must never see you more!' The note was signed 'M. T.'; and Cleveland, with a deep emotion, which he testified even by tears, read it an hundred times over, and then clasped it to his bosom.

Mordaunt Mertoun heard by letter from his father, but in a very different style. Basil bade him farewell for ever, and acquitted him henceforward of the duties of a son, as one on whom he, notwithstanding the exertions of many years, had found himself unable to bestow the affections of a parent. The letter informed him of a recess in the old house of Jarlshof, in which the writer had deposited a considerable quantity of specie and of treasure, which he desired Mordaunt to use as his own. 'You need not fear,' the letter bore, 'either that you lay yourself under obligation to me or that you are sharing the spoils of piracy. What is now given over to you is almost entirely the property of your deceased mother, Louisa Gonzago, and is yours by every right. Let us forgive each other,' was the conclusion, 'as they who must meet no more.' And they never met more; for the elder Mertoun, against whom no charge was ever preferred, disappeared after the fate of Cleveland was determined, and was generally believed to have retired into a foreign convent.

The fate of Cleveland will be most briefly expressed in a letter which Minna received within two months after the 'Haleyon' left Kirkwall. The family were then assembled at Burgh-Westra, and Mordaunt was a member of it for the time, the good Udaller thinking he could never sufficiently repay the activity which he had shown in the defence of his daughters. Norna, then beginning to recover from her temporary alienation of mind, was a guest in the family, and Minna, who was sedulous in her attention upon this unfortunate victim of mental delusion, was seated with her, watching each symptom of returning reason, when the letter we allude to was placed in her hands.

'Minna,' it said — 'dearest Minna! farewell, and for ever! Believe me, I never meant you wrong — never. From the moment I came to know you, I resolved to detach myself from my hateful comrades, and had framed a thousand schemes, which have proved as vain as they deserved to be; for why, or how, should the fate of her that is so lovely, pure, and innocent be involved with that of one so guilty? Of these dreams I will speak no more. The stern reality of my situation is much

milder than I either expected or deserved ; and the little good I did has outweighed, in the minds of honourable and merciful judges, much that was evil and criminal. I have not only been exempted from the ignominious death to which several of my compeers are sentenced ; but Captain Weatherport, about once more to sail for the Spanish Main, under the apprehension of an immediate war with that country, has generously solicited and obtained permission to employ me, and two or three more of my less guilty associates, in the same service — a measure recommended to himself by his own generous compassion, and to others by our knowledge of the coast, and of local circumstances, which, by whatever means acquired, we now hope to use for the service of our country. Minna, you will hear my name pronounced with honour, or you will never hear it again. If virtue can give happiness, I need not wish it to you, for it is yours already. — Farewell, Minna.'

Minna wept so bitterly over this letter that it attracted the attention of the convalescent Norna. She snatched it from the hand of her kinswoman, and read it over at first with the confused air of one to whom it conveyed no intelligence, then with a dawn of recollection, then with a burst of mingled joy and grief, in which she dropped it from her hand. Minna snatched it up and retired with her treasure to her own apartment.

From that time Norna appeared to assume a different character. Her dress was changed to one of a more simple and less imposing appearance. Her dwarf was dismissed, with ample provision for his future comfort. She showed no desire of resuming her erratic life ; and directed her observatory, as it might be called, on Fitful Head, to be dismantled. She refused the name of Norna, and would only be addressed by her real appellation of Ulla Troil. But the most important change remained behind. Formerly, from the dreadful dictates of spiritual despair arising out of the circumstances of her father's death, she seemed to have considered herself as an outcast from Divine grace ; besides that enveloped in the vain occult sciences which she pretended to practise, her study, like that of Chaucer's physician, had been 'but little in the Bible.' Now the sacred volume was seldom laid aside ; and to the poor ignorant people who came as formerly to invoke her power over the elements she only replied — 'The winds are in the hollow of His hand.' Her conversion was not, perhaps, altogether rational ; for this the state of a mind disordered by such a complication of horrid incidents probably prevented. But it seemed to be sincere, and was certainly use-

ful. She appeared deeply to repent of her former presumptuous attempts to interfere with the course of human events, superintended as they are by far higher powers, and expressed bitter compunction when such her former pretensions were in any manner recalled to her memory. She still showed a partiality to Mordaunt, though, perhaps, arising chiefly from habit; nor was it easy to know how much or how little she remembered of the complicated events in which she had been connected. When she died, which was about four years after the events we have commemorated, it was found that, at the special and earnest request of Minna Troil, she had conveyed her very considerable property to Brenda. A clause in her will specially directed that all the books, implements of her laboratory, and other things connected with her former studies, should be committed to the flames.

About two years before Norna's death, Brenda was wedded to Mordaunt Mertoun. It was some time before old Magnus Troil, with all his affection for his daughter, and all his partiality for Mordaunt, was able frankly to reconcile himself to this match. But Mordaunt's accomplishments were peculiarly to the Udaller's taste, and the old man felt the impossibility of supplying his place in his family so absolutely, that at length his Norse blood gave way to the natural feeling of the heart, and he comforted his pride, while he looked around him, and saw what he considered as the encroachments of the Scottish gentry upon THE COUNTRY (so Zetland is fondly termed by its inhabitants), that as well 'his daughter married the son of an English pirate as of a Scottish thief,' in scornful allusion to the Highland and Border families, to whom Zetland owes many respectable landholders, but whose ancestors were generally esteemed more renowned for ancient family and high courage than for accurately regarding the trifling distinctions of *meum* and *tuum*. The jovial old man lived to the extremity of human life, with the happy prospect of a numerous succession in the family of his younger daughter; and having his board cheered alternately by the minstrelsy of Claud Halcro and enlightened by the lucubrations of Mr. Triptolemus Yellowley, who, laying aside his high pretensions, was, when he became better acquainted with the manners of the islanders, and remembered the various misadventures which had attended his premature attempts at reformation, an honest and useful representative of his principal, and never so happy as when he could escape from the spare commons of his sister Barbara to the genial

table of the Udaller. Barbara's temper also was much softened by the unexpected restoration of the horn of silver coins, the property of Norna, which she had concealed in the mansion of old Stourburgh, for achieving some of her mysterious plans, but which she now restored to those by whom it had been accidentally discovered, with an intimation, however, that it would again disappear unless a reasonable portion was expended on the sustenance of the family — a precaution to which Tronda Dronsdaughter (probably an agent of Norna's) owed her escape from a slow and wasting death by inanition.

Mordaunt and Brenda were as happy as our mortal condition permits us to be. They admired and loved each other, enjoyed easy circumstances, had duties to discharge which they did not neglect, and, clear in conscience as light of heart, laughed, sung, danced, daffed the world aside, and bid it pass.

But Minna — the high-minded and imaginative Minna — she, gifted with such depth of feeling and enthusiasm, yet doomed to see both blighted in early youth, because, with the inexperience of a disposition equally romantic and ignorant, she had built the fabric of her happiness on a quicksand instead of a rock — was she, could she be happy? Reader, she *was* happy; for, whatever may be alleged to the contrary by the sceptic and the scorner, to each duty performed there is assigned a degree of mental peace and high consciousness of honourable exertion, corresponding to the difficulty of the task accomplished. That rest of the body which succeeds to hard and industrious toil is not to be compared to the repose which the spirit enjoys under similar circumstances. Her resignation, however, and the constant attention which she paid to her father, her sister, the afflicted Norna, and to all who had claims on her, were neither Minna's sole nor her most precious source of comfort. Like Norna, but under a more regulated judgment, she learned to exchange the visions of wild enthusiasm, which had exerted and misled her imagination, for a truer and purer connexion with the world beyond us than could be learned from the sagas of heathen bards or the visions of later rhymers. To this she owed the support by which she was enabled, after various accounts of the honourable and gallant conduct of Cleveland, to read with resignation, and even with a sense of comfort mingled with sorrow, that he had at length fallen, leading the way in a gallant and honourable enterprise, which was successfully accomplished by those companions to whom his determined bravery had opened the road. Bunce, his fantastic

follower in good as formerly in evil, transmitted an account to Minna of this melancholy event, in terms which showed that, though his head was weak, his heart had not been utterly corrupted by the lawless life which he had for some time led, or at least that it had been amended by the change; and that he himself had gained credit and promotion in the same action seemed to be of little consequence to him compared with the loss of his old captain and comrade.¹ Minna read the intelligence, and thanked Heaven, even while the eyes which she lifted up were streaming with tears, that the death of Cleveland had been in the bed of honour; nay, she even had the courage to add to her gratitude that he had been snatched from a situation of temptation ere circumstances had overcome his new-born virtue; and so strongly did this reflection operate that her life, after the immediate pain of this event had passed away, seemed not only as resigned, but even more cheerful than before. Her thoughts, however, were detached from the world, and only visited it, with an interest like that which guardian spirits take for their charge, in behalf of those friends with whom she lived in love, or of the poor whom she could serve and comfort. Thus passed her life, enjoying from all who approached her an affection enhanced by reverence; insomuch that, when her friends sorrowed for her death, which arrived at a late period of her existence, they were comforted by the fond reflection that the humanity which she then laid down was the only circumstance which had placed her, in the words of Scripture, 'a little lower than the angels!'

¹ See Bunce's Fate. Note 47.

NOTES TO THE PIRATE

NOTE 1. — UDALLERS, p. 7

THE udallers are the allodial possessors of Zetland, who hold their possessions under the old Norwegian law, instead of the feudal tenures introduced among them from Scotland.

NOTE 2. — 'PLANTIE CRUIVE,' p. 8

Patch of ground for vegetables. The liberal custom of the country permits any person, who has occasion for such a convenience, to select out of the uninclosed moorland a small patch, which he surrounds with a drystone wall and cultivates as a kail-yard, till he exhausts the soil with cropping, and then he deserts it and incloses another. This liberty is so far from inferring an invasion of the right of proprietor and tenant, that the last degree of contempt is inferred of an avaricious man when a Zetlander says he would not hold a 'plantie cruive' of him.

NOTE 3. — THE BEUSERKARS, p. 12

The sagas of the Scalds are full of descriptions of these champions, and do not permit us to doubt that the Berserkars, so called from fighting without armour, used some physical means of working themselves into a frenzy, during which they possessed the strength and energy of madness. The Indian warriors are well known to do the same by dint of opium and bang.

NOTE 4. — ACCIDENTS TO FOWLERS, p. 14

Fatal accidents, however, sometimes happen. When I visited the Fair Isle in 1814, a poor lad of fourteen had been killed by a fall from the rocks about a fortnight before our arrival. The accident happened almost within sight of his mother, who was casting peats at no great distance. The body fell into the sea, and was seen no more. But the islanders account this an honourable mode of death; and as the children begin the practice of climbing very early, fewer accidents occur than might be expected.

NOTE 5. — NORSE FRAGMENTS, p. 15

Near the conclusion of chapter II. it is noticed that the old Norwegian sagas were preserved and often repeated by the fishermen of Orkney and Zetland, while that language was not yet quite forgotten. Mr. Baikie of Tankerness, a most respectable inhabitant of Kirkwall, and an Orkney proprietor, assured me of the following curious fact:—

A clergyman, who was not long deceased, remembered well when some remnants of the Norse were still spoken in the island called North Ronaldsha. When Gray's ode, entitled the *Fatal Sisters*, was first published, or at least first reached that remote island, the reverend gentleman had the well judged curiosity to read it to some of the old persons of the isle, as a poem which regarded the history of their own country. They listened with great attention to the preliminary stanzas :

Now the storm begins to lour,
Haste the loom of hell prepare,
Iron sleet of arrowy shower
Hurries in the darken'd air.

But when they heard a verse or two more, they interrupted the reader, telling him they knew the song well in the Norse language, and had often sung it to him when he asked them for an old song. They called it the 'Magicians,' or the 'Enchantresses.' It would have been singular news to the elegant translator, when executing his version from the text of Bartholin, to have learned that the Norse original was still preserved by tradition in a remote corner of the British dominions. The circumstance will probably justify what is said in the text concerning the traditions of the inhabitants of those remote isles at the beginning of the 18th century.

Even yet, though the Norse language is entirely disused, except in so far as particular words and phrases are still retained, these fishers of the Ultima Thule are a generation much attached to these ancient legends. Of this the Author learned a singular instance.

About twenty years ago, a missionary clergyman had taken the resolution of traversing those wild islands, where he supposed there might be a lack of religious instruction, which he believed himself capable of supplying. After being some days at sea in an open boat, he arrived at North Ronaldsha, where his appearance excited great speculation. He was a very little man, dark-complexioned, and from the fatigue he had sustained in removing from one island to another, he appeared before them ill-dressed, and unshaved ; so that the inhabitants set him down as one of the ancient Picts, or, as they call them with the usual strong guttural, Peghts. How they might have received the poor preacher in this character was at least dubious : and the schoolmaster of the parish, who had given quarters to the fatigued traveller, set off to consult with Mr. Stevenson, the able and ingenious engineer of the Scottish Lighthouse Service, who chanced to be on the island. As his skill and knowledge were in the highest repute, it was conceived that Mr. Stevenson could decide at once whether the stranger was a Peght, or ought to be treated as such. Mr. Stevenson was so good-natured as to attend the summons, with the view of rendering the preacher some service. The poor missionary, who had watched for three nights, was now fast asleep, little dreaming what odious suspicions were current respecting him. The inhabitants were assembled round the door. Mr. Stevenson, understanding the traveller's condition, declined disturbing him, upon which the islanders produced a pair of very little, uncouth-looking boots, with prodigiously thick soles, and appealed to him whether it was possible such articles of raiment could belong to any one but a Peght. Mr. Stevenson, finding the prejudices of the natives so strong, was induced to enter the sleeping-apartment of the traveller, and was surprised to recognise in the supposed Peght a person whom he had known in his worldly profession of an Edinburgh shopkeeper, before he had assumed his present vocation. Of course he was enabled to refute all suspicions of Peghtism.

NOTE 6. — SEA MONSTERS, p. 16

I have said, in the text, that the wondrous tales told by Pontoppidan, the Archbishop of Upsal, shall find believers in the Northern Archipelago.

It is in vain they are cancelled even in the later editions of Guthrie's *Grammar*, of which instructive work they used to form the chapter far most attractive to juvenile readers. But the same causes which probably gave birth to the legends concerning mermaids, sea-snakes, krakens, and other marvellous inhabitants of the Northern Ocean, are still afloat in those climates where they took their rise. They had their origin probably from the eagerness of curiosity manifested by our elegant poetess, Mrs. Hemans:

What hidest thou in thy treasure-caves and cells,
Thou ever-sounding and mysterious sea?

The additional mystic gloom which rests on these Northern billows for half the year, joined to the imperfect glance obtained of occasional objects, encourage the timid or the fanciful to give way to imagination, and frequently to shape out a distinct story from some object half-seen and imperfectly examined. Thus, some years since, a large object was seen in the beautiful Bay of Scalloway in Zetland, so much in vulgar opinion resembling the kraken, that though it might be distinguished for several days, if the exchange of darkness to twilight can be termed so, yet the hardy boatmen shudder to approach it, for fear of being drawn down by the suction supposed to attend its sinking. It was probably the hull of some vessel which had foundered at sea.

The belief in mermaids, so fanciful and pleasing in itself, is ever and anon refreshed by a strange tale from the remote shores of some solitary islet.

The Author heard a mariner of some reputation in his class vouch for having seen the celebrated sea-serpent. It appeared, so far as could be guessed, to be about a hundred feet long, with the wild mane and fiery eyes which old writers ascribe to the monster; but it is not unlikely the spectator might, in the doubtful light, be deceived by the appearance of a good Norway log floating on the waves. I have only to add, that the remains of an animal, supposed to belong to this latter species, were driven on shore in the Zetland Isles within the recollection of man. Part of the bones were sent to London, and pronounced by Sir Joseph Banks to be those of a basking shark; yet it would seem that an animal so well known ought to have been immediately distinguished by the Northern fishermen.

NOTE 7. — THE SCART OR CORMORANT, p. 25

The scart or cormorant may be seen frequently dashing in wild flight along the roosts and tides of Zetland, and yet more often drawn up in ranks on some ledge of rock, like a body of the Black Brunswickers in 1815.

NOTE 8. — TUSSEY'S POVERTY, p. 36

This is admitted by the English agriculturist:

My music since has been the plough,
Entangled with some care among;
The gain not great, the pain enough,
Hath made me sing another song.

NOTE 9. — ADMINISTRATION OF ZETLAND, p. 38

At the period supposed, the Earl of Morton held the islands of Orkney and Zetland, originally granted in 1643, confirmed in 1707, and rendered absolute in 1742. This gave the family much property and influence, which they usually exercised by factors, named chamberlains. In 1766 this property was sold by the then Earl of Morton to Sir Lawrence Dundas, by whose son, Lord Dundas, it is now held. — Thomas Lord Dundas of Aske, in Yorkshire, was created Earl of Zetland in 1838 (*Luining*).

NOTE 10. — 'TO BE FEY,' p. 47

When a person changes his condition suddenly, as when a miser becomes liberal or a churl good-humoured, he is said, in Scotch, to be 'fey'; that is, predestined to speedy death, of which such mutations of humour are received as a sure indication. [The same word *fet*, with the same meaning, is current amongst the people of the North Frisian Islands—*Myt, Führ*, etc.]

NOTE 11. — THE BITTLE, OR BEETLE, p. 56

The beetle with which the Scottish housewives used to perform the office of the modern mangle, by beating newly-washed linen on a smooth stone for the purpose, called the beetling-stone.

NOTE 12. — CHAPMAN'S DROUTH, p. 62

The chapman's drouth—that is, the pedlar's thirst—is proverbial in Scotland, because these pedestrian traders were in the use of modestly asking only for a drink of water, when, in fact, they were desirous of food.

NOTE 13. — AN *ORAMUS* TO ST. RONALD, p. 62

Although the Zetlanders were early reconciled to the Reformed faith, some ancient practices of Catholic superstition survived long among them. In very stormy weather a fisher would vow an *oramus* to St. Ronald, and acquitted himself of the obligation by throwing a small piece of money in at the window of a ruinous chapel.

NOTE 14. — SALE OF WINDS, p. 70

The King of Sweden, the same Erick quoted by Mordaunt, 'was,' says Olaus Magnus, 'in his time held second to none in the magical art; and he was so familiar with the evil spirits whom he worshipped, that what way soever he turned his cap, the wind would presently blow that way. For this he was called Windycap.'—*Historia de Gentibus Septentrionalibus*; Roma, 1555. It is well known that the Laplanders drive a profitable trade in selling winds; but it is perhaps less notorious that within these few years such a commodity might be purchased on British ground, where it was likely to be in great request. At the village of Stromness, on the Orkney main island, called Pomona, lived, in 1814, an aged dame called Bessie Millie, who helped out her subsistence by selling favourable winds to mariners. He was a venturesome master of a vessel who left the roadstead of Stromness without paying his offering to propitiate Bessie Millie; her fee was extremely moderate, being exactly sixpence, for which, as she explained herself, she boiled her kettle and gave the bark advantage of her prayers, for she disclaimed all unlawful arts. The wind thus petitioned for was sure, she said, to arrive, though sometimes the mariners had to wait some time for it. The woman's dwelling and appearance were not unbecoming her pretensions: her house, which was on the brow of the steep hill on which Stromness is founded, was only accessible by a series of dirty and precipitous lanes, and for exposure might have been the abode of Eolus himself. In whose commodities the inhabitant dealt. She herself was, as she told us, nearly one hundred years old, withered and dried up like a mummy. A clay-coloured kerchief, folded round her head, corresponded in colour to her corpse-like complexion. Two light blue eyes that gleamed with a lustre like that of insanity, an utterance of astonishing rapidity, a nose and chin that almost met together, and a ghastly expression of cunning, gave her the effect of Hecaté. She remembered Gow, the pirate, who had been a native

of these islands, in which he closed his career, as mentioned in the preface. Such was Bessie Millie, to whom the mariners paid a sort of tribute, with a feeling betwixt jest and earnest.

NOTE 15. — RELUCTANCE TO SAVE DROWNING MEN, p. 76

It is remarkable that, in an archipelago where so many persons must be necessarily endangered by the waves, so strange and inhuman a maxim should have ingrafted itself upon the minds of a people otherwise kind, moral, and hospitable. But all with whom I have spoken agree that it was almost general in the beginning of the 18th century, and was with difficulty weeded out by the sedulous instructions of the clergy, and the rigorous injunctions of the proprietors. There is little doubt it had been originally introduced as an excuse for suffering those who attempted to escape from the wreck to perish unassisted, so that, there being no survivor, she might be considered as lawful plunder. A story was told me, I hope an untrue one, that a vessel having got ashore among the breakers on one of the remote Zetland islands, five or six men, the whole or greater part of the unfortunate crew, endeavoured to land by assistance of a hawser, which they had secured to a rock; the inhabitants were assembled, and looked on with some uncertainty, till an old man said, 'Mirs, if these men come ashore, the additional mouths will eat all the meal we have in store for winter; and how are we to get more?' A young fellow, moved with this argument, struck the rope asunder with his axe, and all the poor wretches were immersed among the breakers, and perished.

NOTE 16. — 'MAIR WRECKS ERE WINTER,' p. 81

The ancient Zetlander looked upon the sea as the provider of his living, not only by the plenty produced by the fishings, but by the spoil of wrecks. Some particular islands have fallen off very considerably in their rent sin; the commissioners of the lighthouses have ordered lights on the isle of Sanda and the Pentland skerries. A gentleman, familiar with those seas, expressed surprise at seeing the farmer of one of the isles in a boat with a very old pair of sails. 'Had it been His will,' said the man, with an affected deference to Providence very inconsistent with the sentiment of his speech — 'had it been *His* will that light had not been placed yonder, I would have had enough of new sails last winter.'

NOTE 17. — THE DROWS, OR TROWS, p. 102

The Drows, or Trows, the legitimate successors of the Northern *duergar*, and somewhat allied to the fairies, reside, like them, in the interior of green hills and caverns, and are most powerful at midnight. They are curious artificers in iron, as well as in the precious metals, and are sometimes propitious to mortals, but more frequently capricious and malevolent. Among the common people of Zetland, their existence still forms an article of universal belief. In the neighbouring isles of Feröe they are called Foddensken-cand, or subterranean people; and Lucas Jacobson Debes, well acquainted with their nature, assures us that they inhabit those places which are polluted with the effusion of blood or the practice of any crying sin. They have a government, which seems to be monarchical.

NOTE 18. — CORN-MILLS, p. 116

There is certainly something very extraordinary in a stranger in Zetland corn-mills. They are of the smallest possible size; the wheel which drives them is horizontal, and the cogs are turned diagonally to the water. The

beam itself stands upright, and is inserted in a stone quern of the old-fashioned construction, which it turns round, and thus performs its duty. Had Robinson Crusoe ever been in Zetland, he would have had no difficulty in contriving a machine for grinding corn in his desert island. These mills are thatched over in a little hovel, which has much the air of a pigsty. There may be five hundred such mills on one island, not capable any one of them of grinding above a sackful of corn at a time. — [Mills similar in construction to these, and very little larger in size, may be seen in Norway at the present time, in the year 1803.]

NOTE 19. — MONTROSE IN ZETLAND, p. 156

Montrose, in his last and ill-advised attempt to invade Scotland, augmented his small army of Danes and Scottish Royalists by some bands of raw troops, hastily levied, or rather pressed into his service, in the Orkney and Zetland Isles, who, having little heart either to the cause or manner of service, behaved but indifferently when they came into action.

NOTE 20. — SIR JOHN URRY, p. 156

Here, as afterwards remarked in the text, the Zetlander's memory deceived him grossly. Sir John Urry, a brave soldier of fortune, was at that time in Montrose's army, and made prisoner along with him. He had changed so often that the mistake is pardonable. After the action, he was executed by the Covenanters; and

Wind-changing Warwick then could change no more.

Strachan commanded the body by which Montrose was routed.

NOTE 21. — THE SWORD-DANCE, p. 157

The sword-dance is celebrated in general terms by Olaus Magnus. He seems to have considered it as peculiar to the Norwegians, from whom it may have passed to the Orkney-men and Zetlanders, with other Northern customs.

OF THEIR DANCING IN ARMS

Moreover, the northern Goths and Swedes had another sport to exercise youth with, all, that they will dance and skip amongst naked swords and dangerous weapons; and this they do after the manner of masters of defence, as they are taught from their youth by skilful teachers, that dance before them, and sing to it. And this play is showed especially about Shrovetide, called in Italian *macherarum*. For, before carnivals, all the youth dance for eight days together, holding their swords up, but within the scabbards, for three times turning about; and then they do it with their naked swords lifted up. After this, turning more moderately, taking the points and pummels one of the other, they change ranks, and place themselves in an triangular figure, and this they call *rosam*; and presently they dissolve it by drawing back their swords and lifting them up, that upon every one's head there may be made a square *rosa*, and then by a most nimble whirling their swords about collaterally, they quickly leap back, and end the sport, which they guide with pipes or songs, or both together; first by a more heavy, then by a more vehement, and lastly by a most vehement, dancing. But this speculation is scarce to be understood but by those who look on, how comely and decent it is, when at one word, or one commanding, the whole armed multitude is directed to fall to fight, and clergymen may exercise themselves, and mingle themselves among others at this sport, because it is all guided by most wise reason.

To the Primate's account of the sword-dance, I am able to add the words sung or chanted on occasion of this dance, as it is still performed in Papa Stour, a remote island of Zetland, where alone the custom keeps its ground. It is, it will be observed by antiquaries, a species of play or mystery, in which the Seven Champions of Christendom make their appearance, as in

the interlude presented in *A Well that Ends Well*. This dramatic curiosity was most kindly procured for my use by Dr. Scott of Haxlar Hospital, son of my friend Mr. Scott of Newble, Zetland. Mr. Hibbert has, in his *Description of the Zetland Islands*, given an account of the sword-dance, but somewhat less full than the following:—

WORDS USED AS A PRELUDE TO THE SWORD-DANCE, A DANISH OR NORWEGIAN BALLET, COMPOSED SOME CENTURIES AGO, AND PRESERVED IN PAPA STOUR, ZETLAND

PERSONS DRAMATIS¹

(Enter MASTER, in the character of ST. GEORGE.)

Brave gentles all within this boor,²
If ye delight in any sport,
Come see me dance upon this floor,³
Which to you all shall yield comfort.
Then shall I dance in such a sort,
As possible I may or can;
You, minstrel man, play me a porte.⁴
That I on this floor may prove a man.

(He bows, and dances in a line.)

Now have I danced with heart and hand,
Brave gentles all, as you may see,
For I have been tried in many a land,
As yet the truth can testify;
In England, Scotland, Ireland, France, Italy, and Spain
Have I been tried with that good sword of steel.

(Draws, and flourishes.)

Yet, I deny that ever a man did make me yield;
For in my body there is strength,
As by my manhood may be seen;
And I, with that good sword of length,
Have oftentimes in perils been,
And over champions I was king.
And by the strength of this right hand,
Once on a day I kill'd fifteen,
And left them dead upon the land.
Therefore, brave minstrel, do not care,
But play to me a porte most light,
That I no longer do forbear,
But dance in all these gentles' sight;
Although my strength makes you abased,
Brave gentles all, be not afraid,
For here are six champions, with me, staid,
All by my manhood I have raised.

(He dances.)

Since I have danced, I think it best
To call my brethren in your sight,
That I may have a little rest,
And they may dance with all their might;
With heart and hand as they are knights,
And shake their sword of steel so bright,
And show their main strength on this floor,
For we shall have another bout
Before we pass out of this boor.
Therefore, brave minstrel, do not care
To play to me a porte most light,
That I no longer do forbear,
But dance in all these gentles' sight.

(He dances, and then introduces his knights, as under.)

Stout James of Spain, both tried and stour,⁵
Thine acts are known full well indeed;

¹ So placed in the old MS.

² Boor — so spelt to accord with the vulgar pronunciation of the word 'bower.'

³ Porte — so spelt in the original. The word is known as indicating a piece of music on the bagpipe, to which ancient instrument, which is of Scandinavian origin, the sword-dance may have been originally composed.

⁴ Stour — great.

And champion Dennis, a French knight,
 Who stout and bold is to be seen ;
 And David, a Welshman born,
 Who is come of noble blood ;
 And Patrick also, who blew the horn,
 An Irish knight, amongst the wood ;
 Of Italy, brave Anthony the good,
 And Andrew of Scotland king ;
 St. George of England, brave indeed,
 Who to the Jews wrought muckle tinte.¹
 Away with this ! Let us come to sport,
 Since that ye have a mind to war,
 Since that ye have this bargain sought,
 Come let us fight and do not fear.
 Therefore, brave minstrel, do not care
 To play to me a porte most light,
 That I no longer do forbear,
 But dance in all these gentles' sight.

(*He dances, and advances to JAMES OF SPAIN.*)

Stout James of Spain, both tried and stour,
 Thine acts are known full well indeed,
 Present thyself within our sight,
 Without either fear or dread.
 Count not for favour or for feid,
 Since of thy acts thou hast been sure ;
 Brave James of Spain, I will thee lead,
 To prove thy manhood on this floor.

(*JAMES dances.*)

Brave champion Dennis, a French knight,
 Who stout and bold is to be seen,
 Present thyself here in our sight,
 Thou brave French knight,
 Who bold hast been ;
 Since thou such valiant acts hast done,
 Come let us see some of them now
 With courtesy, thou brave French knight,
 Draw out thy sword of noble hue.

(*DENNIS dances, while the others retire to a side.*)

Brave David a bow must string, and with awe
 Set up a wand upon a stand,
 And that brave David will cleave in twa.²

(*DAVID dances solus.*)

Here is, I think, an Irish knight,
 Who does not fear, or does not fright,
 To prove thyself a valiant man,
 As thou hast done full often bright ;
 Brave Patrick, dance, if that thou can.

(*He dances.*)

Thou stout Italian, come thou here ;
 Thy name is Anthony, most stout ;
 Draw out thy sword that is most clear,
 And do thou fight without any doubt ;
 Thy leg thou shake, thy neck thou lout,³
 And show some courtesy on this floor,
 For we shall have another bout
 Before we pass out of this boor.
 Thou kindly Scotsman come thou here ;
 Thy name is Andrew of Fair Scotland ;
 Draw out thy sword that is most clear,
 Fight for thy king with thy right hand ;
 And aye as long as thou canst stand,
 Fight for thy king with all thy heart ;
 And then, for to confirm his band,
 Make all his enemies for to smart.

(*He dances.*) (*Music begins.*)

¹ *Muckle tinte* — much loss or harm ; so in MS.

² Something is evidently amiss or omitted here. David probably exhibited some feat of archery.

³ *Lout* — to bend or bow down, pronounced *loot*, as *doot* is *doot* in Scotland.

FIGURA¹

The six stand in rank with their swords reclining on their shoulders. The master (St. George) dances, and then strikes the sword of James of Spain, who follows George, then dances, strikes the sword of Dennis, who follows behind James. In like manner the rest — the music playing — swords as before. After the six are brought out of rank, they and the master form a circle, and hold the swords point and hilt. This circle is danced round twice. The whole, headed by the master, pass under the swords held in a vaulted manner. They jump over the swords. This naturally places the swords across, which they disentangle by passing under their right sword. They take up the seven swords and form a circle, in which they dance round.

The master runs under the sword opposite, which he jumps over backwards. The others do the same. He then passes under the right-hand sword, which the others follow, in which position they dance, until commanded by the master, when they form into a circle, and dance round as before. They then jump over the right-hand sword, by which means their backs are to the circle, and their hands across their backs. They dance round in that form until the master calls 'Loose,' when they pass under the right sword, and are in a perfect circle.

The master lays down his sword, and lays hold of the point of James's sword. He then turns himself, James, and the others, into a clue. When so formed, he passes under out of the midst of the circle; the others follow; they vault as before. After several other evolutions, they throw themselves into a circle, with their arms across the breast. They afterwards form such figures as to form a shield of their swords, and the shield is so compact that the master and his knights dance alternately with this shield upon their heads. It is then laid down upon the floor. Each knight lays hold of their former points and hilts with their hands across, which disentangle by figures directly contrary to those that formed the shield. This finishes the ballet.

EPILOGUE

Mars does rule, he bends his brows,
He makes us all agast;²
After the few hours that we stay here,
Venus will rule at last.
Farewell, farewell, brave gentles all,
That herein do remain,
I wish you health and happiness
Till we return again.

[Exeunt.]

The manuscript from which the above was copied was transcribed from a *very old one* by Mr. William Henderson, jun., of Papa Stour, in Zetland. Mr. Henderson's copy is not dated, but bears his own signature, and, from various circumstances, it is known to have been written about the year 1788.

NOTE 22. — THE LAW-TING, p. 202

The Law-ting was the comitia, or supreme court, of the country, being retained both in Orkney and Zetland, and presenting, in their constitution, the rude origin of a parliament.

NOTE 23. — HILL OF HOY, p. 20²

And from which Hill of Hoy, at midsummer, the sun may be seen, it is said, at midnight. So says the geographer Bleau, although, according to Dr. Wallace, it cannot be the true body of the sun which is visible, but only its image refracted through some watery cloud upon the horizon.

NOTE 24. — THE DWARFIE STONE, p. 202

This is one of the wonders of the Orkney Islands, though it has been rather undervalued by their late historian, Mr. Barry. The Island of Hoy

¹ *Figuir* — so spelt in MS.² *Agast* — so spelt in MS.

risers abruptly, starting as it were out of the sea, which is contrary to the gentle and flat character of the other isles of Orkney. It consists of a mountain, having different eminences or peaks. It is very steep, furrowed with ravines, and placed so as to catch the mists of the Western Ocean, and has a noble and picturesque effect from all points of view. The highest peak is divided from another eminence called the Ward Hill by a long swampy valley full of peat-bogs. Upon the slope of this last hill, and just where the principal mountain of Hoy opens into a hollow swamp, or corrie, lies what is called the Dwarfie Stone. It is a great fragment of sandstone, composing one solid mass, which has long since been detached from a belt of the same materials, cresting the eminence above the spot where it now lies, and which has slid down till it reached its present situation. The rock is about seven feet high, twenty-two feet long, and seventeen feet broad. The upper end of it is hollowed by iron tools, of which the marks are evident, into a sort of apartment, containing two beds of stone, with a passage between them. The uppermost and largest bed is five feet eight inches long, by two feet broad, which was supposed to be used by the dwarf himself; the lower couch is shorter, and rounded off, instead of being squared at the corners. There is an entrance of about three feet and a half square, and a stone lies before it calculated to fit the opening. A sort of skylight window gives light to the apartment. We can only guess at the purpose of this monument, and different ideas have been suggested. Some have supposed it the work of some travelling mason; but the *cul bono* would remain to be accounted for. The Rev. Mr. Barry conjectures it to be a hermit's cell; but it displays no symbol of Christianity, and the door opens to the westward. The Orcadian traditions allege the work to be that of a dwarf, to whom they ascribe supernatural powers and a malevolent disposition, the attributes of that race in Norse mythology. Whoever inhabited this singular den certainly enjoyed

Pillow cold, and sheets not warm.

I observed that, commencing just opposite to the Dwarfie Stone, and extending in a line to the sea-beach, there are a number of small barrows, or cairns, which seem to connect the stone with a very large cairn where we landed. This curious monument may therefore have been intended as a temple of some kind to the Northern *Dii Manes*, to which the cairns might direct worshippers.

NOTE 25. — CARBUNCLE ON THE WARD HILL, p. 203

'At the west end of this stone (i. e. the Dwarfie Stone) stands an exceeding high mountain of a steep ascent, called the Ward Hill of Hoy, near the top of which, in the months of May, June, and July, about midday, is seen something that shines and sparkles admirably, and which is often seen a great way off. It hath shined more brightly before than it does now; and though many have climbed up the hill and attempted to search for it, yet they could find nothing. The vulgar talk of it as some enchanted carbuncle, but I take it rather to be some water sliding down the face of a smooth rock, which, when the sun, at such a time, shines upon, the reflection causeth that admirable splendour.' — Dr. Wallace's *Description of the Islands of Orkney*, 12mo, 1700, p. 52.

NOTE 26. — FORTUNE-TELLING RHYMES, p. 220

The Author has in chapter xxi. supposed that a very ancient Northern custom, used by those who were accounted soothsaying women, might have survived, though in jest rather than earnest, among the Zetlanders, their descendants. The following original account of such a scene will show the

ancient importance and consequence of such a prophetic character as was assumed by Norna : —

There lived in the same territory (Greenland) a woman named Thorbiorga, who was a prophetess, and called the little Vola (or fatal sister), the only one of nine sisters who survived. Thorbiorga during the winter used to frequent the festivities of the season, invited by those who were desirous of learning their own fortune and the future events which impended. Torquil being a man of consequence in this country, it fell to his lot to inquire how long the dearth was to endure with which the country was then afflicted; he therefore invited the prophetess to his house, having made liberal preparation, as was the custom, for receiving a guest of such consequence. The seat of the soothsayer was placed in an eminent situation, and covered with pillows filled with the softest eider-down. In the evening she arrived, together with a person who had been sent to meet her and show her the way to Torquil's habitation. She was attired as follows : — She had a sky-blue tunic, having the front ornamented with gems from the top to the bottom, and wore around her throat a necklace of glass beads.¹ Her head-gear was of black lambskin, the lining being the fur of a white wild cat. She leant on a staff, having a ball at the top.² The staff was ornamented with brass, and the ball or globe with gems or pebbles. She wore a Hunland (or Hungarian) girdle, to which was attached a large pouch, in which she kept her magical implements. Her shoes were of sealskin, dressed with the hair outside, and secured by long and thick straps, fastened by brazen clasps. She wore gloves of the wild cat's skin, with the fur inmost. As this venerable person entered the hall, all saluted her with due respect; but she only returned the compliments of such as were agreeable to her. Torquil conducted her with reverence to the seat prepared for her, and requested she would purify the apartment and company assembled by casting her eyes over them. She was by no means sparing of her words. The table being at length covered, such viands were placed before Thorbiorga as suited her character of a soothsayer. These were, a preparation of goat's milk and a mess composed of the hearts of various animals; the prophetess made use of a brazen spoon and a pointless knife, the handle of which was composed of a whale's tooth, and ornamented with two rings of brass. The table being removed, Torquil addressed Thorbiorga, requesting her opinion of his house and guests, at the same time intimating the subjects on which he and the company were desirous to consult her.

Thorbiorga replied, it was impossible for her to answer their inquiries until she had slept a night under his roof. The next morning, therefore, the magical apparatus necessary for her purpose was prepared, and she then inquired, as a necessary part of the ceremony, whether there was any female present who could sing a magical song called *Vardlokur*. When no songstress such as she desired could be found, Gudrida, the daughter of Torquil, replied, 'I am no sorceress or soothsayer; but my nurse, Haldisa, taught me, when in Iceland, a song called *Vardlokur*.' 'Then thou knowest more than I was aware of,' said Torquil. 'But as I am a Christian,' continued Gudrida, 'I consider these rites as matters which it is unlawful to promote, and the song itself as unlawful.' 'Nevertheless,' answered the soothsayer, 'thou mayest help us in this matter without any harm to thy religion, since the task must remain with Torquil to provide everything necessary for the present purpose.' Torquil also earnestly entreated Gudrida, till she consented to grant his request. The females then surrounded Thorbiorga, who took her place on a sort of elevated stage; Gudrida then sung the magic song, with a voice so sweet and tuneful as to excel anything that had been heard by any present. The soothsayer, delighted with the melody, returned thanks to the singer, and then said, 'Much I have now learned of dearth and disease approaching the country, and many things are now clear to me which before were hidden as well from me as others. Our present dearth of substance shall not long endure for the present, and plenty will in the spring succeed to scarcity. The contagious diseases also, with which the country has been for some time afflicted, will in a short time take their departure. To thee, Gudrida, I can, in recompense for thy assistance on this occasion, announce a fortune of higher import than anyone could have conjectured. You shall be married to a man of name here in Greenland; but you shall not long enjoy that union, for your fate recalls you to Iceland, where you shall become the mother of a numerous and honourable family, which shall be enlightened by a luminous ray of good fortune. So, my daughter, wishing thee health, I bid thee farewell.' The prophetess, having afterwards given answers to all queries which were put to her, either by Torquil or his guests, departed to show her skill at another festival, to which she had been invited for that purpose. But all which she presaged, either concerning the public or individuals, came truly to pass.

¹ We may suppose the beads to have been of the potent adder-stone, to which so many virtues were ascribed.

² Like those anciently borne by porters at the gates of distinguished persons, as a badge of office.

The above narrative is taken from the Saga of Erick Randa, as quoted by the learned Bartholin in his curious work. He mentions similar instances particularly of one Helda, celebrated for her predictions, who attended festivals for the purpose, as a modern Scotsman might say, of 'spaeing' for tunes, with a gallant 'tail,' or retinue, of thirty male and fifteen female attendants. — *See De Causis Contemptis a Danis adhuc Gentilibus Mortis* lib. iii. cap. 4.

NOTE 27. — WHALING CUSTOMS, p. 222

The garland is an artificial coronet, composed of ribbons by those young women who take an interest in a whaling vessel or her crew; it is always displayed from the rigging, and preserved with great care during the voyage.

The best oil exudes from the jaw-bones of the whale, which, for the purpose of collecting it, are suspended to the masts of the vessel.

NOTE 28. — ARMADA IN ZETLAND, p. 226

The admiral of the Spanish Armada was wrecked on the Fair Isle, half way betwixt the Orkney and Zetland Archipelago. The Duke of Medina Sidonia landed, with some of his people, and pillaged the islanders of their winter stores. These strangers are remembered as having remained on the island by force, and on bad terms with the inhabitants, till spring returned when they effected their escape. — [The Spanish admiral who was wrecked on Fair Island was not the Duke of Medina Sidonia, but Don Juan Gomez de Medina. See *Diary of James Melville*, Bannatyne Club ed., 1829.]

NOTE 29. — FISHERMEN'S WIVES, p. 231

Dr. Edmonston, the ingenious author of a *View of the Ancient and Present State of the Zetland Islands*, has placed this part of the subject in an interesting light: —

It is truly painful to witness the anxiety and distress which the wives of these poor men suffer on the approach of a storm. Regardless of fatigue, they leave their home and fly to the spot where they expect their husbands to land, or ascend the summit of a rock, to look out for them on the bosom of the deep. Should they get the glimpse of a sail they watch with trembling solicitude its alternate rise and disappearance on the waves and though often tranquillised by the safe arrival of the objects of their search, yet it sometimes is their lot 'to hail the bark that never can return.' Subject to the influence of a variable climate, and engaged on a sea naturally tempestuous, with rapid currents scarcely a season passes over without the occurrence of some fatal accident or hairbreadth escape. — *View, &c., of the Zetland Islands*, vol. i. p. 238.

Many interesting particulars respecting the fisheries and agriculture of Zetland, as well as its antiquities, may be found in the work we have quoted.

NOTE 30. — PROMISE OF ODIN, p. 240

Although the father of Scandinavian mythology has been as a deity long forgotten in the archipelago, which was once a very small part of his realm yet even at this day his name continues to be occasionally attested as security for a promise.

It is curious to observe that the rites with which such attestations are still made in Orkney correspond to those of the ancient Northmen. It appears from several authorities that in the Norse ritual, when an oath was imposed, he by whom it was pledged passed his hand, while pronouncing it through a massive ring of silver kept for that purpose.¹ In like manner

¹ See the *Eyrbiggja Saga*.

two persons, generally lovers, desirous to take the promise of Odin, which they considered as peculiarly binding, joined hands through a circular hole in a sacrificial stone which lies in the Orcadian Stonehenge, called the Circle of Stennis, of which we shall speak more in Note 46, p. 466. The ceremony is now confined to the troth-plighting of the lower classes, but at an earlier period may be supposed to have influenced a character like Minna in the higher ranks.

NOTE 31. — COFFIN KEY, p. 242

An elder brother, now no more, who was educated in the navy, and had been a midshipman in Rodney's squadron in the West Indies, used to astonish the Author's boyhood with tales of those haunted islets. On one of them, called, I believe, Coffin Key, the seamen positively refused to pass the night, and came off every evening while they were engaged in completing the watering of the vessel, returning the following sunrise.

NOTE 32. — MOTTO TO CHAP. XXVI., p. 278

It is worth while saying that this motto, and the ascription of the beautiful ballad from which it is taken to the Right Honourable Lady Ann Lindsay, occasioned the ingenious authoress's acknowledgment of the ballad, of which the Editor, by her permission, published a small impression, inscribed to the Bannatyne Club.

NOTE 33. — FRAWA-STACK, p. 287

The Frawa-Stack, or Maiden-Rock, an inaccessible cliff, divided by a narrow gulf from the Island of Papa, has on the summit some ruins, concerning which there is a legend similar to that of Danaë.

NOTE 34. — THE PICTISH BURGH, p. 288

The Pictish burgh, a fort which Norna is supposed to have converted into her dwelling-house, has been fully described in *Ivanhoe* (Note 27, p. 460 of this edition). An account of the celebrated Castle of Mousa is there given, to afford an opportunity of comparing it with the Saxon Castle of Coningsburgh. It should, however, have been mentioned that the Castle of Mousa underwent considerable repairs at a comparatively recent period. Accordingly, Torfæus assures us that even this ancient pigeon-house, composed of dry stones, was fortification enough, not indeed to hold out a ten years' siege, like Troy in similar circumstances, but to wear out the patience of the besiegers. Erland,¹ the son of Harold the Fair-spoken, had carried off a beautiful woman, the mother of a Norwegian earl, also called Harold, and sheltered himself with his fair prize in the Castle of Mousa. Earl Harold followed with an army, and, finding the place too strong for assault, endeavoured to reduce it by famine; but such was the length of the siege, that the offended earl found it necessary to listen to a treaty of accommodation, and agreed that his mother's honour should be restored by marriage. This transaction took place in the beginning of the 13th century, in the reign of William the Lion of Scotland.² It is probable that the improvements adopted by Erland on this occasion were those which finished the parapet of the castle, by making it project outwards, so that the Tower of Mousa rather resembles the figure of a dice-box, whereas others of the same kind have the form of a truncated cone. It is easy to see how the protection of the highest parapet would render the defence more easy and effectual. —

¹ [See Glossary.]

² See Torfæi *Orcades*, p. 131.

In 1850 the Society of Antiquaries exerted themselves in effecting repairs on the tower (*Lainy*). — [It is now included among the buildings protected by the Ancient Monument Protection Act, 1882.]

NOTE 35. — THE MACRAWS, p. 295

The MacRaws were followers of the MacKenzies, whose chief has the name of Caberfae, or Buckshead, from the cognizance borne on his standards. Unquestionably the worthy piper trained the seal on the same principle of respect to the clan term which I have heard has been taught to dogs, who, unused to any other air, dance after their fashion to the tune of 'Caberfae.'

NOTE 36. — NORNA'S SPELLS, p. 299

The spells described in chapter xxviii. are not altogether imaginary. By this mode of pouring lead into water, and selecting the part which chances to assume a resemblance to the human heart, which must be worn by the patient around her or his neck, the sage persons of Zetland pretend to cure the fatal disorder called the loss of a heart.

NOTE 37. — BICKER OF ST. MAGNUS, p. 315

The bicker of St. Magnus, a vessel of enormous dimensions, was preserved at Kirkwall, and presented to each bishop of the Orkneys. If the new incumbent was able to quaff it out at one draught, which was a task for Hercules or Rory Mohr of Dunvegan, the omen boded a crop of unusual fertility.

NOTE 38. — LUGGIE, p. 315

Luggie, a famous conjurer, was wont, when storms prevented him from going to his usual employment of fishing, to angle over a steep rock at the place called, from his name, Luggie's Knoll. At other times he drew up dressed food while they were out at sea, of which his comrades partook boldly from natural courage, without caring who stood cook. The poor man was finally condemned and burnt at Scalloway.

NOTE 39. — ANTIQUE COINS FOUND IN ZETLAND, p. 318

While these sheets were passing through the press, I received a letter from an honourable and learned friend, containing the following passage relating to a discovery in Zetland:—'Within a few weeks the workmen, taking up the foundation of an old wall, came on a hearthstone, under which they found a horn, surrounded with massive silver rings, like bracelets, and filled with coins of the Heptarchy in perfect preservation. The place of finding is within a very short distance of the supposed residence of Norna of the Fitful Head.' Thus one of the very improbable fictions of the tale is verified by a singular coincidence.

NOTE 40. — GROUSE IN ORKNEY, p. 331

It is very curious that the grouse, plenty in Orkney as the text declares, should be totally unknown in the neighbouring archipelago of Zetland, which is only about sixty miles' distance, with the Fair Isle as a step between.

NOTE 41. — LAMBMAE LADS, p. 341

It was anciently a custom at St. Olla's fair at Kirkwall that the young people of the lower class, and of either sex, associated in pairs for the period of the fair, during which the couple were termed Lambmae brother and sister. It is easy to conceive that the exclusive familiarity arising out of this custom was liable to abuse, the rather that it is said little scandal was attached to the indiscretions which it occasioned.

NOTE 42. — CHARACTER OF NORNA, p. 355

The character of Norna is meant to be an instance of that singular kind of insanity, during which the patient, while she or he retains much subtlety and address for the power of imposing upon others, is still more ingenious in endeavouring to impose upon themselves. Indeed, maniacs of this kind may be often observed to possess a sort of double character, in one of which they are the being whom their disordered imagination shapes out, and in the other their own natural self as seen to exist by other people. This species of double consciousness makes wild work with the patient's imagination, and, judiciously used, is perhaps a frequent means of restoring sanity of intellect. Exterior circumstances striking the senses often have a powerful effect in undermining or battering the airy castles which the disorder has excited.

A late medical gentleman, my particular friend, told me the case of a lunatic patient confined in the Edinburgh Infirmary. He was so far happy that his mental alienation was of a gay and pleasant character, giving a kind of joyous explanation to all that came in contact with him. He considered the large house, numerous servants, etc., of the hospital as all matters of state and consequence belonging to his own personal establishment, and had no doubt of his own wealth and grandeur. One thing alone puzzled this man of wealth. Although he was provided with a first-rate cook and proper assistants, although his table was regularly supplied with every delicacy of the season, yet he confessed to my friend that, by some uncommon depravity of the palate, everything which he ate *tasted of porridge*. This peculiarity, of course, arose from the poor man being fed upon nothing else, and because his stomach was not so easily deceived as his other senses.

NOTE 43. — BIRDS OF PREY, p. 356

So favourable a retreat does the Island of Hoy afford for birds of prey, that instances of their ravages, which seldom occur in other parts of the country, are not unusual there. An individual was living in Orkney not long since, whom, while a child in its swaddling-clothes, an eagle actually transported to its nest in the Hill of Hoy. Happily, the eyrie being known and the bird instantly pursued, the child was found uninjured, playing with the young eagles. A story of a more ludicrous transportation was told me by the reverend clergyman who is minister of the island. Hearing one day a strange grunting, he suspected his servants had permitted a sow and pigs, which were tenants of his farm-yard, to get among his barley crop. Having in vain looked for the transgressors upon solid earth, he at length cast his eyes upwards, when he discovered one of the litter in the talons of a large eagle, which was soaring away with the unfortunate pig, squeaking all the while with terror, towards her nest in the crest of Hoy.

NOTE 44. — AVERY'S PLEASANTRY, p. 362

This was really an exploit of the celebrated Avery, the pirate, who suddenly, and without provocation, fired his pistols under the table where he

sat drinking with his messmates, wounded one man severely, and thought the matter a good jest. What is still more extraordinary, his crew regarded it in the same light.

NOTE 45. — WELLS AND WAVES, p. 410

A 'well,' in the language of those seas, denotes one of the whirlpools or circular eddies, which wheel and boll with astonishing strength, and are very dangerous. Hence the distinction, in old English, betwixt wells and waves, the latter signifying the direct onward course of the tide, and the former the smooth, glassy, oily-looking whirlpools, whose strength seems to the eye almost irresistible.

NOTE 46. — THE STANDING STONES OF STENNIS, p. 411

The Standing Stones of Stennis, as by a little pleonasm this remarkable monument is termed, furnishes an irresistible refutation of the opinion of such antiquaries as hold that the circles usually called Druidical were peculiar to that race of priests. There is every reason to believe that the custom was as prevalent in Scandinavia as in Gaul or Britain, and as common to the mythology of Odin as to Druidical superstition. There is every reason to think that the Druids never occupied any part of the Orkneys, and tradition as well as history, ascribes the Stones of Stennis to the Scandinavian. Two large sheets of water, communicating with the sea, are connected by a causeway, with openings permitting the tide to rise and recede, which is called the Bridge of Broisgar. Upon the eastern tongue of land appear the Standing Stones, arranged in the form of a half circle, or rather a horseshoe, the height of the pillars being fifteen feet and upwards. Within the circle lies a stone, probably sacrificial. One of the pillars, a little to the westward, is perforated with a circular hole, through which loving couples are wont to join hands when they take the promise of Odin, as has been repeatedly mentioned in the text. The inclosure is surrounded by barrows, and on the opposite isthmus, advancing towards the Bridge of Broisgar, there is another monument of standing stones, which, in this case, is completely circular. They are less in size than those on the eastern side of the lake, their height running only from ten or twelve to fourteen feet. The western circle is surrounded by a deep trench drawn on the outside of the pillars; and I remarked four tumuli, or mounds of earth, regularly disposed around it. Stonehenge excels this Orcadian monument; but that of Stennis is, I conceive, the only one in Britain which can be said to approach it in consequence. All the Northern nations marked by those huge inclosures the places of popular meeting, either for religious worship or the transaction of public business of a temporal nature. The *Northern Popular Antiquities* contain, in an abstract of the *Eyrbyggja Saga*, a particular account of the manner in which the Helga Fels, or Holy Rock, was set apart by the Pontiff Thorolf for solemn occasions.

I need only add that, different from the monument on Salisbury Plain, the stones which were used in the Orcadian circle seem to have been raised from a quarry upon the spot, of which the marks are visible.

NOTE 47. — BUNCE'S FATE, p. 440

We have been able to learn nothing with certainty of Bunce's fate; but our friend, Dr. Dryasdust, believes he may be identified with an old gentleman who, in the beginning of the reign of George I., attended the Rosin Coffee-house regularly, went to the theatre every night, told merciless long stories about the Spanish Main, controlled reckonings, bullied waiters, and was generally known by the name of Captain Bounce.

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GLOSSARY

OF

WORDS, PHRASES, AND ALLUSIONS

- ABOON**, above
ACCOUNT, WENT UPON THE, took part in piratical excursions
ADSUM, here I am
AIGRE, sour, acrimonious
AIR, oak
AILS AT, have objection to, dissatisfaction with
AIN, own
AIR, an open sea-beach
AIRN, iron
ATTS, oats
ALEXANDER, the hero of Nathaniel Lee's *Alexander the Great*, one of Betterton's great rôles
ALEXANDER IN THE TENT OF DARIUS, a reference to Alexander's generous treatment of the wife and mother of the Persian king, Darius, when, after his defeat, they were brought prisoners before the conqueror
ALL FOR LOVE, OR THE WORLD WELL LOST, a tragedy by Dryden
ALOW, ablaze
ALTMONT, the name of the hero of Sir Wm. D'Avenant's *Just Italian* (1630)
'AMONG ALL LIVING CREATURES', etc. (p. 127), adapted from Spenser, *Faerie Queene*, the fragment entitled 'Two Cantos of Mutability,' canto vii.
AMPHITRYON WITH WHOM ONE DINES, the wealthy and hospitable provider of the feast. Both Plautus and Molière have written a comedy with this title
ANES, once
ANEUSHER, ancient name for Forfarshire
A-PEAK, said of an anchor, when before drawing it up the vessel is brought immediately above it
ARION, a celebrated Greek musician, who, driven into the sea by covetous sailors, was carried safely to land by a dolphin
ARMIDA, a character in Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata*, who was smitten with a frantic passion for Rinaldo
ABOUT, avaunt, begone
A-TRIP, just raised (an anchor) perpendicularly off the ground when it is being weighed
AUGHT, owned
AURINIA, a prophetess of the ancient Germans, mentioned in Tacitus, *Germ.*, ch. viii.
AVER, a cart-horse
'AWAY, BEGONE', etc. (p. 392), from Lee's *Rival Queens*, Act iii. sc. 1
AWAY-GANGING CROP, a crop sown in the last year of tenancy, to be reaped by the incoming tenant
AWMOUS, alms
BABY, affectionate diminutive of Barbara
BACK-SPAULD, the back of the shoulder
BATTLE, rich with grass
BANG, or **BHANG**, the Indian name of the common hemp, from which a strong narcotic is made
BARBADOES WATERS, a cordial flavoured with orange and lemon-peel
BARNWELL, chief character in George Lillo's tragedy, (*George Barnwell* (1732))
BAUBLING, contemptible, paltry
BEAR, or **BERS**, a variety of barley; **BEAR-BRAID**, sprouting bear or barley
BEARDED MAN AT VER-SAILLES, Matthieu Jouve Jourdan, who beheaded two of the royal guards in the Marble Court at Versailles, on 6th October 1789
BELL-THE-CAT, beard the lion
BENDS, or **ENDS** (of mermaids). See the passage in *Antony and Cleopatra*, Act ii. sc. 2
BERN, a bairn, or child
BERSERKER, Scandinavian warrior, of proved valour and unusual strength, in a martial frenzy
BICKER, a wooden dish, drinking-cup
BIDE, endure, bear; **SIDE THE BANG**, bear the brunt
BIG, or **BIGO**, to build; **BIGIN**, building, dwelling
BILBOES, an iron bar, with sliding shackles for confining prisoners
BILLIE, a familiar mode of address, brother
BIMMAR, a small steelyard
BLACKBEARD, OLD, the buccanier captain, Edward Teach, or rather Drummond, who terrorised the Spanish Main between 1710 and 1718

- BLACK BRUNSWICKERS**, a regiment, wearing a black uniform, who fought along with the English in the Peninsular War and at Waterloo
- BLACKMORE, SIR RICHARD**, a physician and writer of the Restoration and Queen Anne period
- BLAND**, a drink made from buttermilk
- BLATE**, modest, shy
- BLAST** (as with herglamour), threaten
- BODDLE, OF BODDLE**, a small Scotch coin = 1/16th penny
- BOLLE**, a small aperture
- BONALLY, OF BONAILLIE**, a parting drink
- BONA-BONA**, a bold wench
- BONNIE-WALLIES**, good things, *rumours*
- BONNY DIB**, toy, trinket
- BONKIE**, the skua-gull
- BOROUGH MOOR**, stretched between Craigmillar and Merchiston Castles, on the south side of Edinburgh; there criminals were hanged, and usually buried
- BOURASQUE, OF BOURASQUE**, sudden squall, storm
- BOWIE**, a wooden dish for milk, pail
- BRAID**, broad
- BRAWN**, fine clothes
- BREEKLESS**, trowerless
- BRINNASTIE**, presumably Brindister, on the west side of the Mainland
- BROSE**, oatmeal over which boiling water has been poured
- BROWN, TOM**, a satirical writer, died in 1704
- BUCKIE**, the small black whelk
- BUFFED**, fit for nothing, useless; perhaps from 'buff,' to puff out, inflate
- BULLOCKING**, bullying
- BULLY-BACK**, one bully who backs up another
- BUMMING**, buzzing, humming, droning
- BUMMOCK**, ale brewed for a merry-making
- BURRAFORTH, OF BURRAFRITH**, on the island of Unst, in Shetland
- CABALIST**, a practiser of magic, spirit-raising, etc.
- CACIQUE**, a native Indian chief in and around the Caribbean Sea
- CAIRN**, a mountain; the Graupians, behind which was the country of the predatory Highlanders
- CALLANT**, lad; **CANTY CALLANT**, a cheerful, lively lad, a term of affection
- CANACHO'S SETTLE**. See *Baicho*
- CANNY**, propitious, lucky
- CANTED**, throw with a sudden jerk
- CAPA**, a Spanish mantle
- CAPER**, privateer
- CAPTAIN, YOU SHOULD BE**, etc. (p. 434), from Otway's *Venue Preserved*, Act v.
- CARLE**, fair-servant
- CARLINE**, an old woman, witch
- CARSE OF GOWRIE**, a very fertile district on the north side of the Firth of Forth, in Perthshire
- CART-AVENS**, cart-horses
- CASTING FRATS**, digging turf
- CATERAN**, a Highland robber
- CAUP, OF CAP**, a wooden bowl for holding food
- CEGIAL, THOMAS**. See *Don Quixote*, Part II. chap. xiv.
- CHANGE-HOUSE**, inn, country tavern
- CHEVAL DE BATAILLE**, stock anecdote
- CHIELD**, a fellow
- CHOOCHERS OF THE SLAUGHTER**, more usually Choosers of the Shain, i. e. the Valkyrior, or Maidens of Fate, in Scandinavian mythology
- CLACK-GESE**, barnacle geese, probably called clack-geese from the cry they make
- CLAGGED**, clogged, obstructed, with clay
- CLASHES AND CLAYERS**, scandal and gossip
- CLAUDIO**. See Shakespeare's *Much Ado About Nothing*, Act iii. sc. 2; but it is Pedro, not Claudio, who gives utterance to the sentiment
- CLAVERING**, chattering
- CLEM, OR CLYM, OF THE CLEUGH**, a noted outlaw of Englewood Forest, near Carlisle, as famous an archer as Robin Hood. See a ballad in Percy's *Reliques*, vol. i.
- CLIFFORD**, in Shakespeare's *Henry VI*. Part III. Act ii. sc. 6
- CLOCHNA-BEN**, a hill in Kincardineshire, nearly 2000 feet high
- CLOTTING**, mending, patching
- CLYTON**, a character in *Lee's Alexander*, or *A Queens*
- COAL-NEUGH**, coal-pit
- COBLE**, a small boat
- COBS**, Spanish dollar pieces of eight. See *tugal pieces*
- COG**, a wooden bowl; *cos*, a wooden bowl full
- CO LICENCIO**, SENIOR, your leave, sir
- COLLIER AND THE DEVIL**, the old play of *Grim Collier of Croydon*
- COLUMELLA**, a Roman work on agriculture, of the century A. D.
- COMSTER, OR CONSTRUE**, to interpret, make out
- COUP**, to exchange, barter
- COUPING OF COBLES**, turning of boats
- CRACK ABOUT**, talk, about
- CRAIG**, neck
- CRAKE, TO BE IN A**, to temporarily confuse, distracted
- CROFT LAND**, the best quality of land, always in cultivation
- CROWDIE**, a thick porridge made of oatmeal stirred with water
- CROWNE, JOHN**, a dramatist of Charles II.'s time
- CUMFREY, OR CONFREY**, water-plant, used as a 'cooler of the blood'
- CUMMERS**, gossips, women
- CURCH**, a woman's kerchief for covering the head
- CURTUS**, according to ancient Roman legend, sacrificed himself for his country good by leaping into a chasm that opened in the city
- CUSKER**, a stallion
- CUT A FEATHER**, to move swiftly through the water so that the ripples stream off from the ship's bow both sides
- CUTTY-AZE**, a short axe
- DAFFED**, put aside
- DAFFING**, larking, merriment
- DAFT**, crazy
- DAIKERING**, sauntering
- DANERS**, Danish
- DARRAIGN BATTLE**, justified himself by combat
- D'AVENANT, WILL, OR WILLIAM D'AVENANT**, a dramatist of the 17th century

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ne blood'

gossips, old

man's kechief
the head

ding to ancient
nd, sacrificed

his country's
aping into a

opened in the

ion

ER, to move
ugh the water,

ripples stream
ship's bow on

short axe

side
ng, merriment

entering
h

TAILE, justly
mbat

VILL, or SIR
VENANT, poet

st of the 15th

DEAD-THROW, death-throes
DRAF HUT, a hut that has no
kernel

DUBER, LUCAS JACOBSON, dean
of Thorshaven, in the
Faeroe islands, in the 17th
century, wrote in Danish
a description of those
islands and their in-
habitants

DUCEPTIO VISUS, an ocular
deception

DENMARK, OUR PARENT COUN-
TRY. Norway, which was
the real parent country of
Orkney and Shetland, was
subject to Denmark from
1307 to 1814. Orkney and
Shetland were given up to
Scotland in 1468

DENNIS, JOHN, an associate
of the coffee-house wits,
afterwards a literary critic,
died in 1734

DIN, a toy, ornament

DII MAIUM, protecting
deities

DINO, knock

DIVOT, thin turf used for
roofing cottages

DOTTED, stupid

DON SEBASTIAN, a tragedy
by Dryden (1690)

DOOR-CHUCKS, door-posts

DOUBLOON, a Spanish gold
coin, equal to the double
pistole, and worth about
30s.

DOUSE, respectable

DOUSE, stubborn, sullen, hard

DOUSE THE GLIM, put out the
light

DOWIE, dark, melancholy

DOWLAS, a strong coarse
linen cloth, supposed to
derive its name from
Doullens, in dept. Somme,
France

DOWNA, cannot, will not

DRAMMOCK, raw meal and
water

DREE'D, endured

DROW. See Trow

DRUNK AS DAVY'S SOW. A
Welshman, David Lloyd,
had a sow with six legs.

A visitor whom he brought
to see the curiosity found
David's wife lying dead
drunk beside the animal,
and exclaimed, 'It's the
drunkiest sow I ever
saw'

DUDA clothes

DULAI, a species of seaweed

DUNE, OWE, beaten, mas-
ter-d

DUNKIRKERS, pirates

DUNT, to knock, bang

EDDERBACHVILLE, or EDDER-
CHILLIS, GLEN OF, in the
west of Sutherlandshire

ERE, eyes.

EINTRACHT, means 'con-
cord,' 'unity'

ELD, antiquity, old men of
olden time

EMATHIAN FIELDS, a part of
ancient Thessaly, practi-
cally identical with the
district of Pharsalia

EMPEROR OF ETHIOPIA, Sege, in
Dr. Johnson's *Rambler*,
Nos. 204, 205

ERLAND, not Earl Erland, the
son of Harold the Fair-

spoken, but a minor Orva-
dian chief called Erland the
Younger, who carried off

Margaret, mother of Earl
Harold and wife of Mal-
dadh, a Scottish chief

ETHEERGE, SIR GEORGE, a
witty dramatist of Charles
II.'s reign

ETTRICK FOREST, a former
royal hunting-ground in
Selkirkshire

EVITING, avoiding, escaping
from

FAIR TRADERS, smugglers

FARCE ON HIS FACE, a
malediction

FASH, FASHERY, trouble

FEATHER, CUT A. See Cut a
feather

FECK, MAINT, the greatest
part

FELLES MAKE FOOLS FAIN,
wonders astonish fools;

FELLY, wonderfully

FET, fated, or predestined to
speedy death

FIFISH, crazy, eccentric

FINNER, a small whale

FIR-CLOG, a log of fir-wood

FLICHTER, to flutter or
tremble

FLINCH, or FLENSH, a whale,
slice the blubber from the
bones

FLIP, ale or cider, sweetened,
spiced, and made hot,
generally by plunging the
red-hot poker into the
liquid

FORBYE, besides

FORFIT, the fourth part of a
peck

FOUR QUARTERS, hands and
feet, applied to help

FOWD, or FOD, district judge
or magistrate

FREIT, charm, superstition

FROGS, fastenings for a coat,
consisting of ornamental
buttons and loops

FUNKING, kicking up the
heels

FUR, a furrow

GABRIELUSIE, a beggar or
tinker

GALDRAGON, corrupted from
the Norse *galdra*, to be
witch, and *krinda*, or
krinda, a woman; a witch,
sorceress

GANE, gone; GANGING, going

GANGREL, wandering,
vagrant

GAR, to oblige, force, make

GASCOMB, an instrument for
trenching ground, shaped
like a currier's knife, with
a crooked handle

GATE, way, road, manner

GATHERING-FEAT, the piece
left to keep the fire alight

GAUDA, flimsy ornaments,
gimcracks

GAY MONT, good many

GEAR, property

GENERANDI GLORIA MELLIS,
the glory of producing
honey

GENEVA, gin

GIERVADA, more correctly
GEIRVADA, a sorceress
mentioned in the *Nyr-
biggin Saga*

GIO, a deep ravine which
admits the sea

GIRDLE, an iron frame for
cooking cakes on

GLERE, land belonging to the
parish minister in right of
his office

GLIM, DOUSE THE. See Douse
the glim

GLOWER, to gaze fixedly

GOSSET, lump, fragment

GOS-BOX, mouth

GOLDEN-EYE, a species of
wild duck

GOLDEN WASSER, or GOLD-
WASSER, a liquor mixed
and coloured with goldleaf
ground down fine

GOOSE, a tailor's smoothing-
iron

GOVERNANTE, housekeeper

GOWK, fool

GOWRIE, CARRE OF. See
Carre of Gowrie

GRACUM EST, it is Greek

GRAIP, a three pronged
stable-fork

GRAITH, REARS, fittings

GRAND CAIMAINS, or CAI-
MANS, three coral islands
in the Caribbean Sea

GREW, or ORIE, to shiver,
creep (of the flesh)

GREY FISH, fry of coal-fish,
sillocks

- GUARDA-COSTA**, coastguard vessel, Spanish war-vessel
GUDEMAN AND GUDWIFE, the heads of the house
GUS, a two-stringed (of horseshair) violin
GUSEN, make (good) use of, treat, behave to
GUIBARDS, OF GUIBARDS, New Year's maskers or mummers
GYES-CARLINE, witch, hobgoblin

HAAP, OF HAF, the deep sea
HAFST, to sit or settle
HAGALIN, or **HOGALIN**, payment for liberty to cut peo.
HAILE, whole, entire
HAIN, OR HEIN, in all probability the giant Hymir, who in the *Hymiskvitha* of the *Elder Edda* is called 'Huge-wise,' or exceedingly wise
HALIER, OF HELLER, a cavern into which the tide flows
HALLANSHAKEN, a vagabond, sturdy ragamuffin
HALER, the throat
HANE ON, stick fast on
HAROLD HARFAGNER, first king of all Norway conquered the Shetland Islands in 875
HAR'IT, harvest
HARTLE, SAMUEL, a friend of Milton, and author of numerous pamphlets on husbandry
HAVINGS, behaviour, manners
HAWKEN, OF HALEKEN, hawks exacted by the royal falconer on his visits to the islands, in force till 1830
HAXA, OR HEE, a generic name for a witch or sorceress
HELLICAT, wild, giddy
HELLER. See *Halier*
HERTHA, MOTHER, OR NERTHUS, the earth-goddess of the ancient German races
'HE SPEAKS THE KINDEST WORDS', etc. (p. 392), from Lee's *Rival Queens*, Act I.
HEUS TIBI, DAVE! Hallo there, Davus! Davus was a common name for a slave in Rome
HEUS TU, INEPT! Hallo there, you fool!
HIALTLAND, OR HJALTLAND, the old Norse name for Shetland
HIGH-DUTCH, German

HINNY, honey, a term of endearment
HIPPLE, hobble
HINNE, to move or slide down
HIMPANOLA, the island of Hayti, in the West Indies
HOUSEWIFENESS, housewifery
HOWE, a haunt, haven
HURLY-BOURNE, a large house in a bad state of disrepair

ILKA, each
INBER-GOOSIE, OR INBER-GOOSIE, a variety of northern diver or loon
INOUNDA, the heroine of Mrs. Aphra Behn's novel, *The History of Oroonoko or the Royal Slave* (1698)
IN APICIOUS JUNE, amongst the knotty points of law
INCH-MIRRAH, OR INCH-MURRAH, an island near the south end of Loch Lomond, kept as a deer park by the Duke of Montrose
INFAUS AND OUTFAUS, the right of trying thieves, whether taken within or outside of the feudal domain
INFIELD, land periodically manured and in regular cultivation
'IN THE FIRST RANK OF THOSE DID SIMRI STAND.' See *Absalom and Achitophel*, Part I.
IOUL, JOE, OR JUL, Yuletide, Christmas
ISLE OF PROVIDENCE, one of the Bahamas, and a notorious rendezvous for buccaniers

JACK-A-LENT, a puppet at which boys threw sticks in Lent, a blockhead
JACOBUS, TWENTY-SHILLING, gold coin issued by James I. of England
JACTA EST ALBA, the die is cast, the decision is taken
JAFFIER, one of the conspirators in Otway's *Venice Preserved*
JAGGER, pedlar
JAM NEMINEM ANTEPONES CATONI, no one is to be preferred to Cato
JARL, earl
JARLSHOF, means 'the earl's mansion or house'
JARTO, OR HJARTA, (my) heart, sweetheart
JAUD, jade
JOKUL, yea, sir

JOSEPH, an old-fashioned riding-coat
JOUSE, pillory

KAIL-YARD, cabbage-ground
KAIL-POT, large peabbling broth
KANE, contribution in as poultry, eggs, etc., by the tenant to landlord
KEMPIONS, champion warriors
KEND FOLKS, well-known respectable people
KEV, OR QUAY, a wharf, landing-stage
KIEMPE, KEMPE, a champion, warrior
KNEETEN GUNNER'S DAVEN, be flogged on ship-board whilst laid along the beam of a gun
KNEY, a chest
KITT-CAT CLUB, a literary society, of Manxopolitica, that existed in London between 1700 and 1730
KITCHEN (to), a relish to bread, as cheese, d. fish, or the like
KITTLE, difficult, ticklish
KNAFFED LATIN, spoke I
KRAKEN, a fabulous monster
KREITS-DOLLAR, OR KREIT-THALER, the 'cross' dollar, called also the 'cross dollar,' coined by Austria for her Netherlands possessions
KYLOM, small black Highland cattle

LAIR, learning
LANDLOUTER, adventurer
LANGSPIEL, a kind of horse formerly in use in Shetlands
LAPELLE, WHITE, alluding to the white turned-up coats worn by officers of the Royal Navy
LAVE, rest, residue
LAWRIGHT-MAN, an officer whose chief duty was regulation of weights and measures
LAW-TINE, the supreme court in ancient Shetland Orkney
LEAGUER-LASS, female car-follower
LENNOX, a former county in Scotland, embracing Dunbarton and parts of B. King, Perth, and Lanark
LIMMER, idle hussy

LEWDANTRA, the only lady who, according to Steele in *Spectator*, No. 41, might justifiably paint her face
LEUPUND, a weight, in Scandinavian countries = 17.6 lbs. avoirdupois, varied in Shetland from 12 to 36 lbs. avoird., and was divided into 24 marks
LEAN, a lane between stone walls
LOOMOLLY-BOT, a ship-surgeon's boy or attendant
LOCHLIN, RACE OF. The Norwegians are so called in *Skam*
LOOM, any kind of tub or similar vessel
LOOM, LAD, FOLLOW
LOOT, to bend or bow down
LOWE, NAME
LOW, chimney
LYSINACHUS, a character in Nat. Lee's *Alexander, or Rival Queens*
MAIN, to MORN
MAIR, more; MAIR BY TOWN, particularly
MAIST FECK. See FECK, maist
MALLARD, the male of the common wild duck
MANER, paragonage
MANTUAN, Virgil, who was born at Mantua in North Italy
MARKEAL, or MERCAL, a rude wooden ploughshare
MARCOONED, abandoned on a desert island
MASHING-FAT, a mashing vat or tub
MAVN, must
MEARNS, old name for Kincardineshire
MEAT-MISTRESSSES. In Norway the mistress of the house is now sometimes called in familiar language the meat-mother (*meimor*)
MELLAY, struggle, contest
MELTIE, food; a meal
MIRNIE AND SEMES, honour, gratitude
MARK, a Scotch coin = 1s. 1½d.; the twenty-fourth part of a lispund (*q.v.*)
MERE OF LAND, a measure varying from one to three acres
METHINKS I SEE THE NEW ARION, etc. (p. 132), from *MacFlecknoe*, Dryden's satire on Shadwell
MICHIE MALICHO, skulking villany
MILE, Scots = 9 furlongs

MIRCA, abuse
MIRIAM SCOURGEMEN DISCO, I learn to succour those in distress
MISSED STAYS, failed to go about from one tack to another, lost the opportunity
MOIDORE, a gold coin of Portugal = 7½s.
MOLD, MAN OF, a man of character
MOLESTUARY, relating to a mill
MOROS AND WATERS, boggy places and water-courses
MOULD BOARD, that part of the plough which turns over the ground, the plough-brest
MUCKLE, much
MULTURES, dues paid for grinding grain; in-town
MULTURES, referring to corn grown on cultivated land near the homestead; **OUT-TOWN MULTURES**, to corn grown on land occasionally cultivated
MUM, strong ale brewed from wheat and bitter herbs
NACKET, a portable luncheon
NANCIES OF THE HILLS OR DALES, an allusion to Shensone's poem, *Nancy of the Vale*
NANTS, or NANTES, brandy
NATHELESS, nevertheless
NEST, next
MEMORUM MURMUR, the murmur of the groves
νεφέλη γένετο Ζεύς, Zeus the cloud-gatherer
NEVERST, a handful
NORVAL, a peasant's son in Home's tragedy, *Douglas*
NORWOOD PROPHETESS, Margaret Finch, a gipsy, who told fortunes at Norwood, near London, for ten years before her death in 1740, aged 108
NOUP, a headland, precipitous to the sea and sloping inland
NOWT, black cattle
NUT, DEAF. See Deaf nut
O FORTUNATI NIMIUM, O too fortunate!
OLAF TRYGVARSON, or OLAF TRYGVASON, old Norse king and hero, threw himself into the waves during a sea-fight in the year 1000
OLAVE MAGNUS, was ap-

pointed archbishop of Upsala in the 10th century
OLAVE PLANTED THE CROSS. The Orkney Islands were conquered by Harold Fair-hair in heathen times (875). The Norsemen were christianised by St. Olaf, their king, a century and a half later
OPERA BY OLUFN PERDIDI, I have lost my labour and my oil
ORPHIR. A part of the Mainland (Pomona) of Orkney is called Orphir
ORANUS, or ORANUS, a vow, prayer, and offering. See Note 13, p. 454
ORRA TIME, occasionally, every now and then
OUTIN IN THE CAVE OF POLYPHEMUS, i.e. Ulysses, when captured by the monster Polyphemus (*Odys.*, Bk. ix.)
OUT-TAKEN, except
OWERLAY, a neck-cloth
OWSEN, ozen
PALLADIUS, a Roman writer on agriculture, of the 4th century A. D.
PABCEL-MUSICIAN, an indifferent musician
PARRITCH, porridge
PARTAN, a crab
PERRY, inquisitive, prying
PICHTS, PICTS, the ancient inhabitants of Scotland, looked upon by the vulgar as supernatural beings
PILTRIE, or FELTRY, furs
PUNNY SCOTS = *Ad. English*
PETIT MAITRE, dandy
PETITS GUAYES, or PETIT GUAVE, a small harbour on the West Indian island of Hayti
PHARSALIA, in Thessaly, where in 48 B. C. Caesar gained his great victory over his rival Pompey
PHILOMATH, a lover of learning, almanac-maker
PIAFFED, stepped with a high, slow, showy action — said of a horse
PIERRE, one of the conspirators in Otway's *Venice Preserved*
PISTOLE, a gold coin of Spain, worth about 15s.
PIXIE, a fairy
PLANTIE CRUIVE, a nail-yard
PLAY CASSIO, to get drunk and be made a cat-paw of
POKONA, the Mainland, or principal island of Orkney

- PONTOPPIDAN, ERIC**, the Younger, whose *Forsög til Norges Naturlige Historie* (Eng. trans. 1755) is referred to (p. 452), was bishop of Bergen, not archbishop of Upsala. *See* Olafus Magnus
- POTS**, pistols
- PORTO BELLO**, a town on the north side of the Isthmus of Panama
- PORTUGAL PISCES, PORTAGUES**, pieces of eight (reals) = 4s., silver coins struck in Portugal
- PRIMATE** (p. 456), Olafus Magnus. *See* Pontoppidan
- PRINCE PRETTYMAN**, a character, sometimes a fisherman's son, sometimes a prince, in the Duke of Buckingham's farce, *The Rehearsal* (1672)
- PRINCE VOLSCIUS**, a character in Buckingham's *The Rehearsal*
- PRIOR, MATTHEW**, poet, died in 1721
- PRO BONO PUBLICO**, for the public good
- PROVIDENCE ISLAND**. *See* Isle of Providence
- PUND SCORE**, 1s. 8d. sterling
- QUADRUPEDUMQUE PUTREM SONITU QUATIT ANGULA CAMPUM**, the hoofs of the horses shake the crumbling field
- QUAIGH**, a small wooden cup or drinking-bowl
- QUEAN**, a woman, wench;
- RANDY QUEAN**, disorderly, vagrant woman
- QUEEN IN THE OLD PLAY**. *See* *Macbeth*, Act v. sc. 1. Shakespeare's play was altered and put on the stage by Sir William D'Avenant in 1674
- QUEEN**, hand-mill
- QUID FACIUNT LÆTAS SEGETES**, how the crops are getting on
- RACE OF PORTLAND**, a dangerous current south of Portland Bill in Dorset
- RADDMAN**, or RAADMAN, a councillor
- RANCELMAN**, or RANCELLOR, a kind of parish constable, one of his chief duties being to 'rancel' or search for stolen goods
- RAVEN FLAG** (of Vikings), the raven was sacred to Odin or Woden
- REDDING-KAIM**, a wide-toothed comb for the hair
- REIM-KENNAK**, one who knows mystic rhyme
- RESET, FLACE OF**, resort of beggars and loose characters
- RESTIFF, or RESTIVE**, stubborn, obstinate
- RIDES RUSTY, or TURNS RUSTY**, sets at defiance, behaves obstinately
- RITT**, a scratch or incision
- RIVA**, a cleft in a rock
- ROCHESTER, EARL OF**, the witty but dissolute favourite of Charles II.
- ROCK**, a distaff
- ROKELAY**, a short cloak
- ROLLO THE WALKER, or HROLF THE GANGER**, according to traditional history, the ancestor of the Dukes of Normandy and Norman kings of England
- RONA'S CREST**, the highest hill (1500 ft.) in Shetland, in the north of the Mainland
- ROOSE**, to praise, commend
- ROOST**, a strong and boisterous current
- ROBY MOHR OF DUNVEGAN**. *See* Boswell's *Tour to the Hebrides*, under date Sept. 15, and Scott's *Lord of the Isles*, Appendix, Note M
- ROSCUS**, a celebrated actor of ancient Rome
- ROSEBERRY TOPPING**, a conspicuous hill in Cleveland, North Riding of Yorkshire
- ROSE TAVERN**, in Russell Street, Covent Garden, a celebrated resort of wits and men of fashion
- ROKALANA, or ROKANA**, a character in Nathaniel Lee's *Rival Queens*, or *Alexander the Great* (1677)
- RUMBO**, rum
- RUNES**, letters of the ancient Norse alphabet; a mystic saying or verse of poetry
- SACKLESS**, innocent
- SAIN**, bless
- ST. JOHN, FESTIVAL OF**, one of the principal festivals of the year in all Scandinavian countries
- ST. LEONARD'S** one of the colleges of the University of St. Andrews
- ST. MAGNUS**, an earl of Orkney, assassinated by his cousin Haco in the island of Egilshay on 16th April 1115.
- ST. OLAVE, or OLAF**, king of Norway, most zealous for the introduction of Christianity into that country in the 11th century
- ST. RONALD, or ROGNVALD**, a famous jarl or earl of Orkney of the 12th century, built the cathedral of St. Magnus at Kirkwall
- SAIR, sore, sorry; SAIRER**, greatly
- SAMPHERE**, a succulent plant growing amongst rocks and on salt marches near the sea, used for making pickles. *See* *King Lear*, Act iv. sc. 6
- SANCIO** (on the scum of Camacho's kettle). *See* *Don Quixote*, Pt. II. chap. xx. The 'scum' consisted of 'three pullets and a couple of geese'
- SANDIE-LAVEROCK**, a lark
- SAUNT**, saint
- SAUT**, salt
- SCALD**, an ancient Scandinavian bard or poet
- SCART**, a cormorant; to scratch
- SCAT**, a land-tax paid to the crown; **SCATHOLD**, a common. On p. 129 we should probably read 'scatland,' land paying *skat* or tribute, instead of 'scathold'
- SCAUB**, a precipitous bank, rock
- SCHWARTZ BEER**, black beer
- SCIPIO AT NUMANTIA**. Scipio Africanus Minor found amongst the Spanish (Celtiberian) captives, after the surrender of Numantia (134 B.C.), a beautiful maiden, whom he generously restored to her betrothed
- SCALTE STANE**, piece of rough slate
- SCOURIES, or SCAURIES**, young sea-gulls
- SEALGH, SEALCHIE**, a seal
- SEA-WARE**, seaweed
- SEBASTIAN AND DORAX**, in Dryden's tragedy *Don Sebastian* (1689), dispute and become reconciled
- SEDLAY, SIR CHARLES**, a wit and poet of Charles II.'s reign
- SELL OF HER**, herself
- SET HIM UP, FORSOOTH**, a term expressive of contempt for an assuming person
- SETTING**, becoming, befitting
- SEVERAL**, an inclosed field as opposed to an open common

- SHADWELL**, a dramatist satirised by Dryden under the name of Og in *Abraham and Achitophel*, and as MacFlecknoe in the poem so called.
- SHARNEY FEAT**, fuel made of dried cow's dung.
- SHARPE**, OLD, the buccanier captain, Bartholomew Sharpe, who was active on the Spanish Main about 1680.
- SHEERWATER**, or **SHEARWATER**, a sea-bird of the petrel family, so called from its low flight, skimming close to the water.
- SHELTIE**, a Shetland pony.
- SHEPHERD OF SALISBURY PLAIN**, by Hannah More, setting forth the homely wisdom and piety of one David Saunders.
- SHOON** (Gaelic), there.
- SHOT**, a field, plot of land.
- SHOT-WINDOW**, a small projecting window.
- SHOUPELTIN**, a triton.
- SIC**, such.
- SICCAR**, sure, safe.
- SILLOCKS**, or **SATHE**, the fry of the coal-fish.
- SINCLAIR (MALCOLM) OF QUENDALE**, when asked by the shipwrecked Duke of Medina Sidonia, or rather by his brother, whether he had ever seen such a great man as stood before him, made the reply in the text. See Hibbert's *Description of the Zetland Islands*, pp. 92, etc.
- SINGLES**, talons of a hawk.
- SIR ARTHEGAL**, the impersonation of Justice in Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, from the fifth book (Canto iv.) of which the passage on p. 90 is taken.
- SIR LUCIUS O'TRIGGER**, in Sheridan's *Rivals*.
- SKELPING**, nimble-footed.
- SKEO**, a hut for drying fish.
- SKERRY**, a bare, rocky islet.
- SKILLING**, DANISH = one farthing.
- SKIRL**, scream.
- SKUDLEN**, the leader of a band of maskers, dancers, etc.
- SLAP**, a gap, breach.
- SLOCKEN**, to cool, drench.
- SMOKED**, killed by smoke.
- SNACK**, a hasty meal.
- SNACK**, the latch of the door.
- SNIGGLED**, caught by dropping bait into the (eel's) lurking-place.
- SOCK**, ploughshare.
- SOLE-CLOUT**, the lowest part of a plough, which runs along the bottom of the furrow.
- SONSY**, about and handsome, bold.
- SORNEY**, a beggar or vagabond, who extorts money or victuals through intimidation.
- SOUGH**, a sigh; to con over, hum a tune.
- SPAND**, foretold; **SPAWOMEN**, sorceresses, fortune-tellers.
- SPARGE NUCES**, FUERI, scatter the nuts, boys.
- SPEERINGS**, inquiries.
- SPEECHERIE**, or **SPEECHERY**, insignificant moveables, especially such as have been purloined or gathered in a raid.
- SPEUCE-BEER**, beer made from the young leaves of the spruce-fir.
- SPUNK**, match, torch.
- STACK**, an insulated, precipitous rock.
- STAIG**, a young, unbroken horse.
- STATIRA**, a character in Nathaniel Lee's tragedy, *Rival Queens*.
- STILTS** (of plough), handles.
- STOCK-FISH**, dried cod-fish and ling.
- STOT**, a steer, young bullock.
- STOUR**, stalwart, stout and strong.
- STOUBURGH** may be interpreted 'great fort'.
- STRAIK**, strike, a measure of capacity, about two bushels.
- STRATHNAVERN**, a valley leading southwards from the coast of Sutherlandshire. Montrose's last fight took place at Invercarron, on the borders of Ross-shire.
- STREK**, stretch, measure oneself with.
- STRIDDLE**, straddle.
- STROMA**, an island in the Pentland Firth, north of Scotland.
- SUCKEN**, the jurisdiction attaching to a mill under feudal tenure.
- SUCK THE MONKEY**, to drink rum or other liquor.
- SUI JURIS**, in possession of full legal rights.
- SUMPH**, a lubberly fellow, blockhead.
- SUNE OF SYNE**, sooner or later.
- SUUM CUIQUE TRIBUITO**, give every one his due.
- SWABIE**, **SWARTBACK**, the great black-backed gull.
- SWATTEE**, to swim quickly and awkwardly.
- SWELCHIE**, whirlpool.
- SWONA**, one of the Orkney islands in the Pentland Firth.
- SYNE**, since.
- SYVER**, a sewer, covered drain.
- TACKSMAN**, an intermediate tenant.
- TA'EN**, taken.
- TAIT OF WOOL**, a tuft or small piece of wool.
- TATE**, **NAHUM**, poet-laureate and dramatist, died in 1715.
- TEMPLARS**, law-students of the Temple.
- TERENTIUS VARRO**, Roman writer on agriculture, of the 1st century B.C.
- THAIRN**, catgut.
- THEFT-BOOT**, hush-money, receiving stolen goods from a thief against pecuniary consideration.
- 'THEN, BY THE HELL I MERIT'**, etc. (p. 431), from Otway's *Venice Preserved*, Act iv. sc. 2.
- THIGGER**, a common beggar.
- THIRL**, the obligation on a tenant to have his flour ground at a certain mill and to pay dues for its maintenance.
- THOLE**, endure, stand.
- THRAWART**, perverse.
- 'THUS FROM THE GRAVE'**, etc. (p. 389), from Lee's *Rival Queens*, Act iv.
- TILL**, a stiff cold clay.
- TIMOTHEUS**, an ancient Greek musician, celebrated from the innovations he made in the art he practised. See also Pope's *Essay on Criticism*.
- TINT**, lost; **TINTE**, loss.
- TIRBACKE**, or **TABROCK**, the kittiwake gull, a guillemot.
- TITTIE**, little sister.
- TOCHER-GOOD**, dowry, portion.
- TOLLSSELL**, or **TOLLEY**, the place where merchants usually assemble, exchange.
- TOOM**, empty.
- TORSK**, dried cod-fish.
- TORTUGA**, an island in the West Indies, off the Venezuelan coast.

Tow, rope
 TOWN, the homestead, farmhouse and its buildings
 Toy, a woman's linen or woollen head-dress hanging down over the shoulders
 TRAP, TO UNDERSTAND, to be knowing, wide-awake
 TRINCULO'S BOTTLE. *See Tempest*, Act iv. sc. 1
 TRINIDADO, Trinidad tobacco
 TRIPTOLEMUS, in ancient Greek mythology, the inventor of the plough and of agriculture
 TROCK, or TRUCE, to barter, bargain
 TROW, or TROLD, a monster, demon of the mountains and of the sea; in this romance, a fairy
 TURF-EINAR, or TORV-EINAR, an illegitimate son of Earl Rognvald of Norway, and the founder of the dynasty of the Earls of Orkney
 TUSSEN, THOMAS, a famous 16th century writer on husbandry
 TWISCAR, TUSHEAR, or TORV-SKAR, a spade for cutting peats
 UDALLER, or ODALLER, a freehold proprietor
 UGOSOME, frightful, horrible
 ULZIE, oil
 UMQUHILE, the late, deceased
 UNCANNY, dangerous, not quite sane
 UNCO, strange, particularly
 UNDERSTAND TRAP. *See* Trap, understand
 UNHALSED, unhailed or unsaluted
 UNICO CONTEXTU, all of a piece

URE, the eighth part of a merk of land (*q. v.*)
 USQUEBAUGH, whisky
 VELEDA, a prophetess of the ancient Germans, mentioned in Tacitus, *Germ.*, ch. viii.
 VELVET, PROPHECIES UPON, foretells what she certainly knows. Compare the racing phrase 'to stand on velvet', to bet in such a way as to win with certainty
 VENTIS SURGENTIEUS, with rising winds
 VIFDA, or VYDA, beef dried without salt
 VISION OF MIRZA, by Addison, in No. 159 of *Spectator*
 VIVERS, victuals
 VOE, an inlet of the sea, creek
 VOLUSPA, VOLUSPÆ, strictly a part of the *Poetic Edda*; in this romance incorrectly used for prophetess, sybil
 WADMAAL, or VADMEL, homespun woollen cloth. The Norwegian peasantry still make their clothes of it at the present day
 WAFT, or WEFT, the cross thread or woof of a web
 WAKERIFE, wakeful, watchful
 WAN (water), filthy, dark-coloured
 WARLOCK, wizard
 WA's, walls
 WATER-DRAGONS. The ancient Norsemen loved to call their vessels 'The Dragon,' 'Serpent,' etc. King Olaf Tryggveson's ship, one of the wonders of the North in ship-

building, was called 'Long Serpent'
 WATTLE, an assessment the salary of the f (magistrate)
 WAUR, worse
 WAW, wave. *See* Note p. 466
 WAWLS, looks wildly, (his) eyes
 WEATHER-GAWS, the secondary or reflected rainbow
 WEIRD, destiny, fate
 WELKING, fading, disappearing
 WELL, a whirlpool, *See* Note 45, p. 466
 WENT UPON THE ACCOUNT, went to the
 WHEN, few
 WHIGAMORE, Covenanted
 WHILES, AT, sometimes times
 WHINGER, large knife, dirk
 WHITTIE-WHATTIERING, mtering, talking frivolously
 WHITTLE, a large knife usually worn at the belt
 WHOMLED, turned over
 WICK, an open bay
 WINDLESTRAW, bent grass
 'WITH ROOMY DECK,' (p. 380), from Dryden's *Annus Mirabilis*
 WITS' COFFEE-HOUSE, in James's Street, the resort of the bluest old Tories
 Queen Anne's reign. also Rose Tavern
 Woo', wool
 WOWF, crazy
 XEBECK, a small timbered vessel, used in the Mediterranean
 YARN WINDLE, a yarn-winder
 YELLOCHED, yelled, shrieked
 YETT, a gate

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